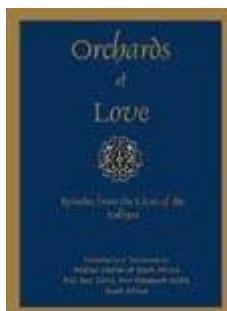


ORCHARDS OF LOVE

INTRODUCTION



Suhbat (Companionship) with the Auliya is imperative for moral reformation and spiritual elevation. Without the company of the Auliya this is not normally possible. Suhbat of the Auliya has been the Sunnah of the Ummah from the very inception of Islam.

In the first phase it was Suhbat with the Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Then followed the Suhbat of the Sahaabah and then of the Auliya. And, this Sunnah has been transmitted down the centuries. No man, barring rare exceptions, gained spiritual ascendency without the Suhbat of the Auliya. Those who had attempted the spiritual sojourn alone, ended up in deviation, some even prostrating to shaitaan. Those who seek to plod this path of reformation and spiritual elevation without the guidance of the Auliya, in the end formulate for themselves cults of satanism.

When the Suhbat — physical Suhbat — of the Auliya is not available, as is the case in the present day, the next best method is to study their lives and read in abundance the episodes, anecdotes, advices and admonition of the Mashaa-ikh.

In this book of Episodes of Allah's Aarifeen, numerous incidents which cultivate a yearning for the spiritual sojourn have been narrated. It is not possible to practically follow every path and practice of the Auliya or the elite members of the spiritual kingdom. Certain acts apply exclusively to the Saint about whom these are related. The purpose of the stories of the Auliya is primarily to gain the fervour and yearning to follow the path which leads to Allah Ta`ala and everlasting success and salvation in the Aakhirah. And that Path is only the Shariah of Islam.

While every act and practice of the Auliya is based on the Sunnah, every man cannot imitate them in exactitude. The total austerity and renunciation (zuhd) which some Auliya practised cannot be adopted by all and sundry. But, the minimum Fardh (compulsory) requirement in this sphere is to renounce the world to the extent that it does not interfere with the Mu`min's strict observance of the Shariah and the cultivation of Taqwa. Then, whomever Allah Ta`ala desires to honour with greater spiritual elevation, he will progress in that direction by way of Divine Guidance, for the Real and True Sheikh is only Allah Azza Wa Jal. But in this world He has created intermediaries for our ease.

May Allah Ta`ala accept this humble effort and guide those who read it with sincerity.

MUJLISUL ULAMA OF SOUTH AFRICA

MUHARRAM 1422 (APRIL 2001)

EXPLANATION OF TERMS

AABID

Aabid literally means a worshipper. In Islamic terminology it refers to a pious person who devotes the greater part of his time to ibaadat.

An Aabid is not an ignorant worshipper. He has adequate knowledge of the rules of ibaadat and of his obligations to Allah Ta`ala.

ABDAAL

Abdaal are a special class of Auliya whose identities are concealed. Their number is 40 and this remains constant. When one dies, he is replaced.

Allah Ta`ala imposes a variety of duties on them. They possess miraculous powers.

AARIF

Aarif literally means a person who knows. In Sufi terminology, it refers to a person who possesses deep insight of spiritual matters. Hidden knowledge of Allah Ta`ala is revealed to him by way of inspiration. He has recognised Allah Ta`ala. His divine perception is vivid and real. It is not a mere intellectual understanding. He sees Allah with his spiritual (baatini) eyes. Plural is Aarifeen.

FAQEER

Faqeer (plural Fuqaraa), literally means a pauper, a destitute person. In the terminology of the Auliya (Sufiyaa), it refers to a pious mendicant (pauper) who does not beg. He reposes trust in Allah Ta`ala.

MISKEEN

Miskeen (plural Masaakeen) in Sufi terminology has a meaning similar to Faqeer.

KASHF

Kashf literally means to open. In the technical terms of the Auliya it refers to messages inspired into the heart of the saintly person. These revelations come from the spiritual realm and are of divine origin.

ILHAAM

Ilhaam is the same as Kashf. However, it is of lesser clarity than Kashf. Both Kashf and Ilhaam are not proofs of the Shariah. They do not constitute a basis for Shar`i law.

If the Kashf and Ilhaam conform to the Shariah, they will be accepted. If in conflict with the Shariah, it will be ignored and a suitable interpretation given to it.

It is possible for a Wali to misinterpret or misunderstand his Kashf or Ilhaam. Other external or internal factors may also lead to a misunderstanding of the meanings of these forms of inspirations.. Hence, the criterion of Haqq (Truth) and Baatil (falsehood) is only the Shariah.

MAJNOON

Literally refers to a mad man. In Sufi terminology it refers to a Wali whose intellectual capacity has been disturbed on account of his absorption in divine love, i.e. love for Allah Ta`ala.

SAALIHEEN

Saaliheen is the plural of Saalih, which means a pious person. It refers to the Auliya.

ZUHD

Zuhd means renunciation of the world or to abstain from worldly pleasures and luxuries. The person who renounces the world is called Zaahid.

BUZRUG

Buzrug is an Urdu / Farsi term referring to a pious person. (Saalih or Wali).

EPISODES FROM THE LIVES OF THE AULIYAA PART 1

1. THE PURPOSE OF ANECDOTES

Someone asked Hadhrat Abul Qaasim Junaid (rahmatullahi alayh): “Hadhrat, what benefit do the Mureedeen derive from the stories of the Auliya?” He said: “Stories (of the Auliya) are one of the armies of Allah. The hearts of the Mureedeen derive strength and peace from these anecdotes.” The questioner asked for proof of this claim. Hadhrat Junaid said: “Allah Ta`ala says in the Qur`aan:

“Every episode which We narrate to you from the stories of the Messengers, We strengthen therewith your heart.”

2. THE EFFECT OF WA`AZ

Shaikh Saalih Aarif-e-Kabeer Abu Sulaimaan Daaraani (rahmatullahi alayh) narrated: “I attended a wa`az (lecture). The talk of the lecturer had an effect on my heart. However, the effect disappeared as soon as the lecture ended. I attended his bayaan (lecture) a second time. The effect of his talk lingered with me even on the road, but disappeared when I reached home. After attending his wa`az a third time, the effect endured even after I had reached home. I then destroyed all objects of sin I had and took to the Path of Allah.”

[One should repeatedly sit in the company of the pious. The Naseehat of the Sheikh will ultimately establish a lasting effect, provided that one is a sincere seeker of the Haqq - Truth].

3. RAHMAT

When episodes of the Auliya are narrated, Rahmat from Allah Ta`ala descends on the gathering.

4. LOVE FOR THE AULIYAA

According to Shaikh Aarif Abu Turaab Bakhshni (rahmatullahi alayh) when the heart of a man turns away from Allah Ta`ala in consequence of his addiction to disobedience and transgression, he makes the Auliya a target for criticism. He denies and ridicules them. (This is a sign of Allah's curse on such a person).

Shaikh Aarif Abul Fawaaris Shah Bin Shujaa Kirmaani (rahmatullahi alayh) said that there is no Ibaadat better than love for the Auliya of Allah Ta`ala. Love for the Auliya is a sign of love for Allah Ta`ala. (This is based on the Hadith: "Good Suhbat (i.e. companionship of the Auliya) is better than good deeds.")

5. ANIMOSITY FOR THE AULIYAA

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (radhiallahu anhu) narrated that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "Verily, Allah Ta`ala said: "He who harbours animosity for My Wali, I give him notice of war."

6. THE ABDAAL

Hadhrat Anas Bin Maalik (radhiallahu anhu) narrated that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that there are 40 Abdaal in his Ummat. Twenty two of them are in Shaam (Syria) and 18 are in Iraq. When one of them dies, Allah Ta`ala appoints someone to fill the vacancy. When Qiyaamah is nearby, they will all die.

(Abdaal - this is a class of Auliya whose identities are secret. They execute a variety of duties imposed on them by Allah Ta`ala).

7. SOME SPECIAL AULIYAA

Hadhrat Mas'ood (radhiallahu anhu) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "There are three hundred servants of Allah, whose hearts are like the heart of Aadam (alayhis salaam); forty have hearts like the heart of Ibraheem (alayhis salaam); seven have hearts like the heart of Izraeel (alayhis salaam); five have hearts like the heart of Jibreel (alayhis salaam); three have hearts like the heart of Meekaeel (alayhis salaam); and one has the heart like the heart of Israafeel (alayhis salaam). When the one dies, Allah Ta`ala appoints one of the group of three to take his place; when one of the group of three dies, Allah Ta`ala appoints one from the group of five to take his place; when one from the group of five dies, Allah Ta`ala appoints one from the group of seven to take his place; when one from the group of seven dies, Allah Ta`ala appoints one from the group of forty to take his place; when one from the group of forty dies, Allah Ta`ala appoints one from the group of three hundred to take his place; when one of the group of three hundred dies, a man from the rank and file of mankind is ennobled (With Imaan and Taqwa) and appointed. Allah Ta`ala removes calamities from the Ummah of Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) by virtue of the blessedness of these Auliya."

The one servant mentioned in this Hadith is called the Qutub or Ghaus. Among the Auliya his rank and position are like the centre of a circle. He is the pivot.

8. THE QUALITIES OF THE ABDAAL

Abu Darda (radhiallahu anhu) said that the rank bestowed to the Abdaal is not on account of their Salaat, Saum and external display of character, but is by virtue of their pure Taqwa, beautiful intentions, rectitude of their hearts and their love and mercy for all Muslims. Allah

Ta`ala has ennobled them with His Knowledge and has bestowed special ranks of His Proximity to them.

They never abuse nor speak ill of anyone. They do not tantalize those who are inferior to them nor despise them. They bear no envy to those superior to them. They excel in virtue. Their disposition is most amiable and they are the most generous. Their hearts hasten towards goodness and they quickly attain the loftiest spiritual heights. This group is the army of Allah and they are the ones who attain success.

9. THE MOST INTELLIGENT

Baraa Bin Aazib (radhiallahu anhu) narrated that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that Allah Ta`ala will award the highest places in Jannat to certain of His servants who were the most intelligent. The Sahaabah enquired: "How did they become the most intelligent?" Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"Their whole attention and all their efforts are directed towards Allah Ta`ala. The objective of all their efforts is Allah's Pleasure. They have completely lost interest in the world, in its futility, in its pleasures and comforts. The world is contemptible to them. They choose to bear the temporary hardships of the world, hence they will gain the everlasting comfort (of the Akhirah)."

The criterion of intelligence by Allah is Taqwa.

10. THE COMPLAINT OF THE FUQARAA

Hadhrat Anas Bin Maalik (radhiallahu anhu) narrates that once the Fuqaraa sent a representative to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). He said to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam): "I am the delegate of the fuqaraa." Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "I regard as my friends those whose delegate you are."

The delegate said: "The fuqaraa say that all goodness has been acquisitioned by the wealthy, while we are deprived. In fact, the wealthy have gained Jannat. They perform Hajj while we lack the means for it. They give Sadaqah, while we are unable. They free slaves while we lack this ability. When they are sick, they transform their wealth into a treasure (by means of charity)."

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"Inform them that those among you who are patient and have the niyyat of attaining thawaab, for them are three such ranks which are not for the wealthy. The first rank: In Jannat will be some mansions of red Yaqoot (a precious stone of Jannat) which will be situated at extremely lofty heights. The people of Jannat will look at these mansions in the same way as the people of the earth look at the stars. Besides a Nabi; a Shaheed and a Mu`min Faqeer, no one will enter.

The second rank: The fuqaraa will enter Jannat 500 years before the wealthy.

The third rank: When a faqeer recites with sincerity:

he gains such thawaab which the wealthy will not acquire even if they spend 10 000 Dirhams (in the Path of Allah). This is the superiority of the faqeer over the wealthy in all deeds of virtue.”

When the delegate informed the fuqaraa of this message, they exclaimed in ecstasy: “O Allah! We are pleased! We are pleased!”

11. ASSOCIATION WITH THE FUQARAA

According to Hasan Basri (rahmatullahi alayhi), Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “Have a greater awareness of the fuqaraa and be kind to them because there is a great treasure for them.”

When the Sahaabah asked about their treasure, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“On the Day of Qiyaamah it will be said to them; search for those who had given you a piece of bread or who had given you a garment or who had given you water to drink, and take them into Jannat.”

Hasan Basri (rahmatullahi alayhi) narrated that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“On the Day of Qiyaamah, the faqeer will be ushered into Allah’s presence. He will plead with Allah as a person pleads with another person. Allah Ta’ala will say:

‘By My Splendor and Grandeur! I did not keep the world away from you because you were contemptible to Me. I did so because I had treasured wonderful bounties for you. These rows (of people) who are in front of you - go into them and take hold of anyone’s hand who had given you something to eat or drink or wear. Then do with them as you wish.’

At that time the condition of the people will be such that they will be immersed in perspiration until their mouths. The faqeer, on hearing this command will enter into the rows and search for the people (who had fed him). He will hold them by the hand and take them into Jannat.”

12. THOSE WHOSE SHARE IS THE AAKHIRAH

It is narrated that Allah Ta’ala revealed to Hadhrat Moosa (alayhi salaam): “O Moosa! There are some of My servants, if they ask of Me the entire Jannat, I will give it to them, and if they ask Me for anything from this world, I will not give it to them, not because they are contemptible to Me, but because I desire to store up the treasures of My bounties for them in the Aakhirah. I save them from the world like a shepherd protects his flock from a wolf.”
[The world, Rasulullah -sallallahu alayhi wasallam - said, is carrion]

Ibn Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) narrated that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that everything has a key. The key of Jannat is to love the true and patient Fuqaraa and Masaakeen. On the Day of Qiyaamah, they will be the companions of Allah Ta’ala.

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) supplicated: “O Allah! Keep me alive as a Miskeen; let me die a Miskeen and raise me up (in Qiyaamah) in the assembly of the Masaakeen.”

This supplication of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is more than ample confirmation for the lofty rank and importance of the Fuqaraa and the Masaakeen. In his dua, Nabi-e-

Kareem (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) did not ask for the Masaakeen to be raised up in his assembly. Rather, he supplicated to be resurrected in their group. This form of his du`aa significantly highlights the rank of the Fuqaraa.

13. NOOR OF THE HEART

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that when noor enters the heart, the (spiritual) breast of man expands. When the Sahaabah asked for a sign of this noor, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “Such a person flees from this abode of deception. He turns his attention to the abode of the Aakhirah and he makes preparations for it before the arrival of maut.”

Thus, a man who has lost interest and desire in this world, has acquired this noor.

14. THE POOR AND THE WEALTHY

Hadhrat Abu Darda (radhiallahu anhu) said: “The wealthy eat and we (the Fuqaraa) also eat. They wear garments and so do we. Neither do they derive benefit from the excess wealth (which they hoard) nor do we gain any benefit (from their excess wealth). On the Day of Qiyaamah, an account will be demanded from them of this wealth, but not from us. Our wealthy brethren have not acted justly. While they love us (or claim so) for Allah’s Sake, they do not include us in their wealth. Such a day will dawn when they will wish that on earth they had been Fuqaraa, while we will not wish that we should have been wealthy.”

15. DU`AA IN DISTRESS

A man came to a Sheikh and said: “Hadhrat, make dua for me. My wife and children have distressed me considerably.”

The Sheikh said: “When your family pesters you and complain, make du`aa. At that time your du`aa is closer to acceptance than my du`aa.”

16. THE WEALTHY ARE IN NEED

A wealthy man presented a gift of 500 dirhams (silver coins) to Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullahi alayh) requesting him to distribute it to the Fuqaraa. Hadhrat Junaid asked: “Do you have more wealth?”

When the man said, “Yes”, Hadhrat Junaid said: “Do you desire more wealth than what you have?” The man said: “Yes”, Hadhrat Junaid said: “Then take these dirhams. You are in greater need than us (Fuqaraa).” Hadhrat Junaid thus returned the money to him and did not accept it.

17. IBRAHEEM BIN AD`HAM REFUSES A GIFT

When a man presented 10 000 dirhams to Hadhrat Ibraheem Bin Ad`ham (rahmatullahi alayh), he refused acceptance and commented: “You desire that my name be struck from the roll of Fuqaraa by giving me these dirhams?”

18. TRUE PEACE

Hadhrat Ibraheem Bin Ad`ham (rahmatullahi alayh) said: “The people of the world searched for peace in the world, but failed to find it. If they became aware of the kingdom we own,

they will kill one another with swords (to gain it)."

19. THE ZAAHID IS KING

Hadhrat Zunnun Misri (rahmatullahi alayh) said that the Zaahid is the king of the Aakhirah. A Zaahid is a Faqeer who has renounced the world.

Sheikh Kabeer Abu Madyan Shaheer (radhiyallahu anhu) said that there are two kinds of kingdoms - the kingdom of geographical territory and the kingdom of the hearts of mankind. The Zaahid is the king of the hearts of men.

20. FAQR (POVERTY / HUNGER)

Sheikh Kabeer Aarif Abu Abdullah Qarshi (rahmatullahi alayh) describing true Faqr (i.e. poverty and hunger for Allah's Sake), said that this hunger is accompanied by pain and pleasure. In this pain and pleasure is the yearning (for Allah Ta'ala).

21. AN ATTITUDE OF DIVINE LOVE

Hadhrat Baayazid Bustaami (rahmatullahi alayh) said that among the Auliya of Allah Ta'ala there are such servants, who, if they are denied the Vision of Allah in Jannat, will seek refuge and protection from Jannat just as people seek protection from Jahannum.

22. THE AARIF'S GAZE

According to Hadhrat Abu Uthmaan Maghribi (rahmatullahi alayh), by virtue of the anwaar of Ilm, the Arif is able to view the wonders of the unseen realms.

23. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE ZAAHIDS AND THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD

Hadhrat Ya`fi (rahmatullahi alayh) said that generally the deeds of worldly people are devoid of sincerity. For example, while they spend wealth in pious acts, their hearts are saturated with love for wealth. It is this love (hubb-e-maal) which prevents them from obedience to Allah Ta'ala.

On the contrary, the Zaahideen (plural of Zaahid) dissociate themselves from the world and its attractions solely for the Sake of Allah Ta'ala. The world is contemptible and abhorrent to them. Their entire existence, body and soul, are focused towards Allah Ta'ala. They combine Ibaadat-e-Qalbiyah and Ibaadat-e-Badaniyah.

[Ibaadat-e-Qalbiyah: This means the worship of the heart. With hearts purified from all evil attributes they are engrossed in Divine Remembrance, contemplation, meditation and derive lessons from whatever they view. Ibaadat-e-Badaniyah refers to the physical acts of worship such as Salaat, Saum, Hajj, etc.]

When Allah Ta'ala sees that their hearts are completely devoid of any love for aliens (i.e. for things besides Allah), He fills their hearts with the treasure of His Qurb (Proximity / Nearness). He then, by His Grace and Mercy, bestows to them such spiritual treasures and lofty heights which the intelligence of worldly men can never comprehend or even conceive.

24. HAATIM ASAM'S ENCOUNTER WITH AN AALIM

Hadhrat Haatim Asam (rahmatullahi alayh) once, on his way to Hajj, passed through the city of Rai. Three hundred and twenty Sufis were accompanying him. A prominent and leading trader of the city, who was a devotee of the Fuqaraa and Masaakeen invited the entire group to be his guests. In the morning he said to Hadhrat Haatim: "An Aalim, Faqeeh here is ill. I am going to visit him. Will you accompany me?" Hadhrat Haatim said: "Visiting the sick is an act of thawaab. Furthermore, to visit an Aalim, is ibaadat. I shall certainly go with you."

The name of the Aalim was Muhammad Bin Muqaatil. He was the Qaadhi of Rai. The entire group went to the house of the Qaadhi. On arrival there, Hadhrat Haatim observed a palatial mansion. It had a large ornamental door. Large and expensive curtains decorated the place. Seeing all the luxury and adornment of the mansion, Hadhrat Haatim was perplexed and astonished. He thought: "O Allah! An Aalim and such pomp and splendour."

When permission for admission was obtained, he was even more surprised at the splendour and glitter of the interior of the mansion. When he came into the presence of the Qaadhi, he observed the extreme luxury of the carpets and the bed on which the Qaadhi was resting. At the head-side a servant was standing with a fan in his hand.

The trader on reaching the Qaadhi's presence, sat down. But Hadhrat Haatim remained standing. Qaadhi Ibn Muqaatil indicated to Hadhrat Haatim to sit down. However, he remained standing. The Qaadhi said: "Perhaps you have a need?"

Hadhrat Haatim said: "I wish to enquire about a mas'alah."

The Qaadhi responded: "Ask!"

Hadhrat Haatim: "First, sit up!"

The Qaadhi complied and sat respectfully.

Hadhrat Haatim: "Where have you acquired your knowledge?"

Qaadhi: "I have acquired it from illustrious and reliable Thiqaat (authorities of the Deen)."

Hadhrat Haatim: "What are their names?"

Qaadhi: "The As-haab of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)." The Qaadhi was a Tabi`ee.

Hadhrat Haatim: "From whom did the Sahaabah gain their knowledge?"

Qaadhi: "From Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)."

Hadhrat Haatim: "From who did Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) obtain his knowledge?"

Qaadhi: "From Jibreel (alayhis salaam)."

Hadhrat Haatim: "And Jibreel (alayhis salaam)?"

Qaadhi: "From Allah Ta`ala."

Hadhrat Haatim: "In that knowledge which Jibreel (alayhi salaam) delivered to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) from Allah Ta`ala, and which Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) delivered to the Sahaabah and they in turn to the Thiqaat who delivered it to you, did you see anywhere that a wealthy man enjoying pomp, splendour and possessing palatial mansions is a man of lofty status by Allah Ta`ala?"

Qaadhi: "No, I have not read this."

Hadhrat Haatim: "What then have you learnt?"

Qaadhi: "I have heard from my Shuyookh that a man who lives like a Zaahid on earth, yearns for the Aakhirah and befriends the Masaakeen, he, holds a very elevated rank by Allah Ta`ala."

Hadhrat Haatim: "Whom have you followed? Have you followed Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and his Sahaabah or Fir`oun and Hamaan? O Ulama of evil practice! Ignorant people engrossed in the world go astray by looking at men like you and they comment: ' If an Alim can live like this, then what wrong are we committing?'"

Hadhrat Haatim (rahmatullahi alayh) after delivering this reprimand and admonition departed. Qaadhi Ibn Muqaatil having heard this sharp rebuke became more ill.

Subhaanallah! After all, he (the Qaadhi) was among the Salf-e-Saaliheen. Even the wealthy and the rulers of that age were not inferior to the Zaahideen of our age.

25. THE ULAMA AND THE SUFIYAA

Hadhrat Haatim Asam (rahmatullahi alayh), was one of the great Mashaa`ikh. Imaam Ibn Hambal (rahmatullahi alayh) would frequent him. He would listen to Hadhrat Haatim's talks, pose questions to him and be pleased with his answers.

In every age the pious Ulama held the Sufiyaa in high esteem. They would visit the Sufiyaa and derive the benefit and blessings of their companionship. Among the notable Ulama who would visit the Sufiyaa was Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri (rahmatullahi alayh). He frequented Hadhrat Rabiah Basriyyah (rahmatullahi alayha) and sit with great respect. Imaam Shaafi and Imaam Hambal (rahmatullahi alayhima) derived benefit of association with Hadhrat Shaibah Raa`ee (rahmatullahi alayh).

IMAAM HAMBAL AND SUFI SHAIQAAN

Once when Imaam Ahmad Bin Hambal and Imaam Shaafi (rahmatullahi alayhima) were together, Hadhrat Shaibaan Raa`ee (rahmatullahi alayh) - who was a Sufi - appeared on the scene. Imaam Ahmad said to Imaam Shaafi: "I wish to draw his attention to the paucity of his knowledge so that he becomes involved in the acquisition of knowledge."

Imaam Shaafi forbade him. But Imaam Ahmad did not heed his advice.

Imaam Ahmad said to Hadhrat Shaibaan: "If someone forgets to perform one of the five Salaat, but does not remember which one, what should he do?"

Hadhrat Shaibaan: "Ahmed, such a heart is forgetful of Allah Ta`ala. It is necessary for this

person to punish his heart so that he does not become forgetful of His Friend (Allah). He should repeat all his Salaat (i.e. the five Salaat).”

When Imaam Ahmad heard this, he lapsed into unconsciousness. After he was revived, Imaam Shaafi said: “Did I not warn you to desist from pestering him?”

27. THE SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE

Someone asked Hadhrat Abul Qaasim Junaid (rahmatullahi alayh): “From whence did you acquire all this knowledge?”

Hadhrat Junaid said: “We did not gain Tasawwuf by fabricating speeches. But we acquired it by means of hunger, renunciation of the world, abandoning the pleasures and comforts of the world, abundance of Thikrullah, fulfillment of the Faraa-idh and Waajibaat, following the Sunnah, discharging all commands and abstaining from all prohibitions.”

28. ABUL MA-AALI AND THE SUFIYAA

One morning while Imaamul Haramain, Abul Ma`aali was conducting his lesson in the Musjid, a Sufi Shaikh with a group of his Mureeds passed nearby. They were on their way to a feast to which they were invited. Sheikh Abul Ma`aali observing them, said to himself: “Besides eating, drinking, dancing and jumping these people have no other occupation. Night and day, this is their engrossment.”

On their way back from the feast, the Sufi Sheikh approached Abul Ma`aali, and said: “I have a question. A man performs Fajr Salaat in the state of Janaabah, then sits teaching in the Musjid and making gheebat of people. What type of man is he?”

Hearing this, Imaamul Haramain Abul Ma`aali was overcome with regret and embarrassment. He said: “Truly, I was in need of a Ghusl at that time.” He thus realised his error and henceforth appreciated the Sufiyaa.

[NB. The Sheikh’s acts of leading the Salaat and remaining in the Musjid in the state of Janaabah were not intentional. Sometimes a man sleeps away after the need for Ghusl develops. When he wakes up he forgets about his Janaabah. This condition of Abul Ma`aali was revealed to the Sufi Sheikh by the inspirational process called Kashf.]

29. THE CORE OF KNOWLEDGE

Imaam Ahmad Bin Hambal (rahmatullahi alayh) used to attend the bayaan (discourse) of a Sufi Aarif. People asked: “Why do you attend his talks? He is not a Muhibbuddin nor does he possess any excellence in academic knowledge.”

Imaam Ahmad responded: “What do you know? These people have the core of knowledge, i.e. the Ma`rifat of Allah Ta`ala.”

30. THE TRUEST MUSLIMS

Envious people misinformed the Khalifah about the Sufiyaa. On account of their lack of understanding they interpreted the statements of the Sufiyaa as being heretical and kufr. The Khalifah ordered the execution of the Sufiyaa among whom were Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi and Sheikh Abul Hasan Noori (rahmatullahi alaihimaa). When it was time for the execution, Sheikh Abul Hasan Noori eagerly advanced to the executioner who enquired: “Why did you

step forward?" Sheikh Noori said: "So that my friend may live a few extra moments."

The astonished executioner thought: "Who branded these people irreligious?"

This information was relayed to the Khalifah, who at that time was in session with his ministers. All present were full of surprise. The Qaadhi who was present said: "Allow me to go to these people. I shall debate with them on masaa'il of the Deen. Their beliefs will then become manifest." The Khalifah consented.

When the Qaadhi came to the group of Sufis, he ordered one of them to come forward. Sheikh Noori stepped forward. After the Qaadhi posed several questions, Sheikh Noori first looked towards the right side, then to the left. He then lowered his head momentarily and satisfactorily answered all the questions. He added: "There are some servants of Allah who stand with Allah and they speak with Allah."

Thereafter he gave a lengthy lecture which reduced the Qaadhi to tears.

The Qaadhi asked: "Why did you glace hither and thither?"

Sheikh Noori said: "I was not aware of the answers to your questions. I therefore sought the aid of my companions on the right. They expressed their inability to answer. I then sought the aid of my companions of the left side. They were unable to answer. I then questioned my heart. My heart acquired the answers from Rabbul Izzat, hence I answered you."

The Qaadhi was bewildered. He sent word to the Khalifah: "If these people are irreligious and zindeeq (a class of kuffaar), then on the surface of the earth there are no Muslims."

31. AN ILLITERATE SUFI

Sheikh Abul Ghaith was completely illiterate, but the Fuqahaa (Jurists of Islam — top-ranking Ulama) of the age would frequent him and discuss the most intricate masaa'il. He would present convincing explanations.

Imaam Abul Qasim Qushairi (rahmatullahi alayh) says that Allah Ta'ala has ennobled the group of Sufiyaa. After the Ambiyaa, Allah Ta'ala has given superiority to the Sufiyaa over all people. He has made their hearts the mines of spiritual mysteries.

32. A TRUE LOVER OF ALLAH

Hadhrat Zunnun Misri (rahmatullahi alayh) said: "I was informed of a Yemeni buzrug who was unique in humility and fear of Allah Ta'ala. After I had completed Hajj, I decided to visit him so that I may derive the benefits of his naseehat. Several people accompanied me on the journey to Yemen. Among them was a youth of exceptional piety. All the signs and bearings of the Sulahaa exuded from his countenance, which glittered with Khauf-e-Ilaahi (Divine Fear). Without any physical ailment, his face had become pale. Without any calamity, tears flowed from his eyes. Solitude was his companion. He loved to be alone. Looking at him, one would think a great calamity had just befallen him."

We rebuked him for his extreme austerity and penances, but he remained silent. He would not reply. Day by day his penances and efforts would increase. This youth journeyed with us until we reached the home of the Yemeni buzrug. After knocking on his door, the buzrug appeared. He looked like a man who had just emerged from the grave. The youth was the

first to greet and speak. Addressing the buzrug, the youth said: ‘Allah Ta`ala has made you and other Auliya like you the physicians of the heart. There is a wound in my heart. I will be greatly indebted to you if you would kindly provide me some balm for my wound.’

The Sheikh said: ‘Ask what you wish to.’

The youth said: ‘Hadhrat, what is the sign of Khauf-e-Ilaahi?’

Sheikh: ‘When the bandah is blessed with Khauf-e-Ilaahi, he becomes fearless of all other fears and Allah’s fear becomes grounded in his heart.’

Hearing this, the youth shuddered and fell down unconscious. On regaining consciousness, he asked: ‘Hadhrat, when is a man certain that he has Khauf-e-Ilaahi?’

Sheikh: ‘He abandons pleasures in the same way as a sick man abstains from delicious food because of the fear of the illness deteriorating, and he tolerates bitter medicine. Similarly, the one who has Khauf-e-Ilaahi abstains from worldly pleasures.’

On hearing this, the youth let out such a shriek which led us to think that his soul had departed from his physical body. After a while he became conscious and asked: ‘What is the sign of Divine Love?’

Sheikh: ‘Friend! The stage of Divine Love is extremely lofty.’

Youth: ‘Please say something!’

Sheikh: ‘The veils are lifted from their hearts and they perceive the splendour and grandeur of their True Beloved with the anwaar (rays of noor) of their hearts. Their souls are always connected to the lofty spiritual realm. The barriers are removed from their hearts. Their intelligence is heavenly. They dwell in the assembly of the Malaa-ikah. They perceive all this with their eyes. Their whole effort is expended for the ibaadat of Allah Ta`ala. The purpose of their ibaadat is neither desire for Jannat nor fear for Jahannum.’

When the youth heard this discourse, he let out a spine-chilling screech and fell down dead. The Sheikh kissed him and sobbed. He then commented: ‘Look at the fear and humility of those who fear and love Allah Ta`ala. This is their elevated rank.’”

[The veils of Divine Love was lifted. Its splendour claimed his life.]

33. A YOUNG THAAKIR

Hadhrat Zunnun Misri (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates: “Once when I was in the land of Shaam, I passed by a luxurious orchard. A young man was performing Salaat under a tree. I went forward and made Salaam. When I made Salaam a second time, the youth quickly ended his Salaat and with his finger wrote the following verses in the sand:

‘The tongue has been prohibited from speaking,

Because it draws a variety of misfortunes and calamities,

Therefore, when you speak, be a Thaakir of your Rabb,

Do not forget Him and praise Him in all conditions.'

On reading this, I stood crying for a long time. I then, in response wrote on the sand with my fingers:

'Every writer shall one day decompose (in the grave),

Time will retain what his hand had written

Therefore, do not write with your hand except something which will give you pleasure when you see it in Qiyaamah.'

When the youth read this, he let out a chilling scream, handing over his life to Allah Ta'ala (i.e. he died). I desired to give his body Ghusl and bury him, but I heard a Voice proclaiming:

'Zunnun! Leave him. Allah Ta'ala had promised that the Malaa-ikah will attend to his burial.'

After hearing this Voice, I stood at a distance and engaged in Salaat. When I went to inspect the youth after I had performed a few Raka'ts, there was no trace of him, nor did I ever gain any information of him."

34. A YOUNG DEVOTEE OF ALLAH

Once while wandering in the mountains of Baitul Maqdis (Jerusalem), Hadhrat Zunnun (rahmatullahi alayh) heard a voice supplicating to Allah Ta'ala. He went in the direction of the voice until he came upon an extremely lean and pale of complexion lad who was pouring out his heart to Allah Ta'ala. When the lad saw Zunnun, he tried to run and conceal himself among the trees. Zunnun exclaimed: "O lad! So much hatred and so much ill-manners! This does not befit the dignity of Mu'mineen. It is bad character."

The lad responded with some admonition and advice, then supplicated to Allah Ta'ala: "O Allah! Conceal me from those who attempt to sever me from You."

As he supplicated, he disappeared from sight.

35. THE NIKAH OF ABDAAL

Hadhrat Abul Qasim Junaid (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates: "Once I attended the nikah of a male and female Abdaal. Each one of those present (i.e. the other Abdaal) stretched his hand above and it was miraculously filled with precious stones which they presented to the married couple. I too stretched my hand and it was filled with saffron. Hadhrat Khidr (alaihis salaam), complimenting me said: 'You have presented the best gift to the bride and bridegroom. No one of the gathering had made such a presentation.'"

36. THE CONSEQUENCE OF DIVERTING THE GAZE FROM ALLAH

An Aarif narrated the following episode: "Once 40 houris (damsels of Jannat) were shown to me. Adorned in heavenly attire of gold and silk and resplendent in their undescribable beauty they were floated above me in the air. I stared in astonishment at them. In consequence, I was placed under Divine Displeasure for 40 days. Thereafter I was shown 80 houris more beautiful and resplendent than the first group. I immediately closed my eyes and fell into Sajdah, supplicating:

‘O Allah! I seek protection with You from all things besides You. I have no need for them. Remove them from my sight.’”

37. THE CONSEQUENCE OF SLEEPING AWAY THE NIGHT

Sheikh Abu Bakr Dhareer (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates: “I had a young, handsome slave who used to fast daily and spend the nights in ibaadat. One day he came to me and said: ‘Last night I went to sleep without reciting my auraad (plural of wird - thikr). In a dream I saw a few exceptionally beautiful damsels emerging out of the wall which had split open. One among them was extremely ugly. Never had I seen such an ugly person in my life. I asked them: ‘ To whom do you belong and for whom is the ugly one?’

They said: ‘ We are all your past nights (of ibaadat) and the ugly one is your last night when you had slept away (missing your ibaadat). If you had died this night, she would have fallen to your share permanently.’

After narrating this dream, the youth let out a shriek and his soul departed from his physical body.”

38. THE EFFECT OF A QUR`AANIC AAYAT ON A LAD

Once Sheikh Abdul Waahid Bin Zaid (rahmatullahi alayh) made preparations for going on Jihaad. He instructed every one of his companions to learn two Qur`aanic verses pertaining to the virtues of Jihaad. One of his companions recited the following Aayat:

“Verily, Allah has purchased from the Mu`mineen their lives and their wealth in lieu of Jannat for them.”

A 14 or 15 year old lad stood up. His deceased father had left for him an enormous amount of wealth. He said: “O Abdul Waahid! Has Allah indeed purchased the lives and wealth of the Mu`mineen in lieu of Jannat?”

The Shaikh replied: “Undoubtedly He has!”

The lad said: “You be my witness. I have sold my wealth and life in exchange for Jannat.”

Sheikh Abdul Waahid: “Understand well that the blade of the sword is extremely sharp and you are still a kid. I fear that you may not be able to persevere and you may back pedal.”

The lad: “O Sheikh! How can I retract after entering in a deal with Allah? What does this mean? I make Allah my witness and say that I have sold all my wealth and my life.”

Feeling very ashamed of himself, Sheikh Abdul Waahid said to himself: “Just look at the intelligence of this lad and at my lack of intelligence inspite of my advanced age.”

In short, the lad gave in Sadaqah his entire estate except his horse, weapons and a necessary amount for expenses. On the day of departure for Jihaad, he came to Sheikh Abdul Waahid and greeted. The Sheikh responded and said: “Be happy! Your trade is extremely profitable.”

Along the journey, the lad would fast by day and remain awake at night in ibaadat. He served the others and attended to their animals. Sheikh Abdul Waahid continues the story:

“When we reached near a city of the Christians, the lad was exclaiming: ‘O Ainaa Mardhiyyah! Where are you?’

My companions said that perhaps the lad has become insane. I called him and asked him: ‘Friend, whom are you calling? Who is Ainaa Mardhiyyah?’ He gave the following explanation:

‘While I was in a state between wakefulness and sleep, a man approaching me said: ‘Come to Ainaa Mardhiyyah.’

I accompanied him until we entered a beautiful orchard. A river of crystal clear water was flowing. Along the banks were extremely beautiful girls dressed most resplendently. When they saw me, they exclaimed in delight: ‘This is the husband of Ainaa Mardhiyyah.’ I made Salaam to them and asked who among them was Ainaa Mardhiyyah. They responded that they were Ainaa Mardhiyyah’s slaves. She was further ahead. I walked on until I reached an orchard in which flowed a river of delicious milk. Along the bank were girls more beautiful than those I had seen. On seeing them I was captivated by their beauty, when they saw me, they delightfully said: ‘This is the husband of Ainaa Mardhiyyah.’ I asked: ‘Where is she?’ They said: ‘We are her servants. She is further ahead. Go to her home.’ I proceeded until I came to a river of pure delicious wine. The beauty of the damsels by this river made me forget all the other beautiful girls I had seen earlier. I greeted them and asked: ‘Is Ainaa Mardhiyyah among you?’ They said: ‘We are all her slaves. She is further on.’ I went further on until I came to a river of pure honey. The damsels on the banks of this river effaced the memory of all the females I had seen earlier. After greeting them, I asked about Ainaa Mardhiyyah. They said: ‘O Friend of Allah! We are her slaves. Walk ahead.’ I proceeded until I came to a beautiful tent-like structure of white pearls. At the entrance stood a girl of such captivating beauty which I had hitherto not seen. When she saw me, she exclaimed: ‘O Ainaa Mardhiyyah! Your husband has come.’

As I entered I saw a golden throne studded with precious stones. On it was seated Ainaa Mardhiyyah in all her resplendence. I was enraptured and beyond myself, captivated and madly in love. Seeing me, she said: ‘Welcome. O Friend of Allah! Your time of coming here is now near.’ I ran forward and wanted to embrace her, but she said: ‘Wait! It is not yet the time. There is earthly life in your soul. Insha-Allah, tonight you will have iftaar of your fast here.’ My eyes opened. Now I cannot contain myself.”

Just as the lad completed his story, a group of the enemy attacked. The lad surged forward among the enemy. After killing nine kuffaar, he was martyred. Sheikh Abdul Waahid said: “When he was martyred I went to him. He was covered with blood and laughing delightfully. Within a few moments his soul departed.”

39. THE SUPPLICATION OF AN AABID

An Aabid (pious worshipper) had engrossed himself in ibaadat for 40 years. Once when he was in a state of spiritual ecstasy (known as Maqaam-e-Naaz), he supplicated: “O Allah! Show me here on earth whatever bounties you have prepared for me in Jannat and also the houris You have destined for me.”

While he was engaging in his supplication, the wall in front of him split open and a most beautiful damsel emerged. Such was her beauty that all mankind would be captivated and enraptured if they had to see her. The Aabid said: “O Pious one! Are you a human being or

an angel?"

She said: "I am the response of your supplication to your Rabb. You have obtained what you had requested. I have been sent to comfort you."

Aabid: "For whom are you?"

Houri: "For you."

Aabid: "How many houris like you will I get?"

Houri: "A hundred. Every houri has a hundred servants. And every one of these servants has a hundred slave-girls. Each slave-girl has a hundred maids."

In sheer delight the Aabid said: "O my beloved! Will anyone receive more than me?"

Houri: "You are insignificant. Every ordinary man who recites only Istighfaar morning and evening, and nothing else, will receive what you will receive."

40. HIDAAYAT COMES TO AN IDOLATER

Sheikh Abdul Waahid Bin Zaid (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates that once the ship in which he was sailing was caught in a storm. The stormy waves buffeted the rudderless ship. At last it reached a desolate island. After disembarking, they found a man worshipping an idol. Shaikh Abdul Waahid told him: "Your object of worship is not The Creator. On the contrary it is itself a created object, while The Being Whom we worship is The Creator of all objects."

Idolater: "Whom do you worship?"

Sheikh: "The Being Whose Throne is in the Heaven; Whose control is on the entire earth; His Power extends over all the living and the dead; His Name is Glorious. He is Almighty and All-Powerful."

Idolater: "How do you know this?"

Sheikh: "That True King sent His true Messenger to us. He guided us."

Idolater: "Where is that Messenger?"

Sheikh: "After he had accomplished his mission for which he was sent, The Creator called him back."

Idolater: "Did that Messenger leave with you any sign?"

Sheikh: "He left behind the Book of Allah."

Idolater: "Show it to me."

After showing him the Qur'aan Shareef, he said: "I do not know how to read it. Read it for me."

Sheikh Abdul Waahid recited a Surah. The idolater was so touched that he cried profusely.

Idolater: “The command of the Being Whose Speech this is should be wholeheartedly obeyed. Never should he be disobeyed in any way.”

He thus embraced Islam. Sheikh Abdul Waahid continues: “We taught him the basics of the Deen and a few Surahs. When night fell we all went to sleep, he said: ‘Brothers! Does the Ma’bood (Being of worship) about Whom you have informed me, also sleep?’ We told him that Allah does not sleep. He is perpetually Alive and Awake. The convert said: ‘What evil servants are you? Your Master remains awake, but you sleep!’ We were truly amazed by his talks.

After a few days, when we decided to continue our voyage, he said: ‘Brothers! Take me along with you.’ We agreed. At last we reached Abaadan. I said to my companions: ‘We should assist our brother Muslim.’ We made a collection amongst us and presented the money to him. When we did this, he exclaimed:

‘You are indeed peculiar people. You guided me to The Straight Path, but you have strayed from it. I am truly astonished. When I used to worship the idol – when I did not know Allah, He never destroyed me. He always cared for me. Why will He now abandon me after I have recognised Him and am worshipping Him?’ (He did not accept the money).

Three days later someone informed me that the new Muslim was dying. I visited him and asked him if he needed anything. He said: ‘I need nothing. The Being Who had brought you to the island has fulfilled all my needs.’”

Sheikh Abdul Waahid, while sitting by the new Muslim fell asleep. He narrates the dream he saw:

“I saw a luxurious dense orchard in which was a domed structure. Seated on a resplendent throne inside the mansion was a young damsel of stunning beauty. She said: ‘For Allah’s Sake send the new Muslim quickly. I am extremely restless in this separation.’

My eyes opened. I saw that he had already undertaken the journey of the Aakhirah. May Allah’s Mercy be on him.

I gave him ghusl, kafan and buried him. That night I saw in a dream the same orchard and mansion. Seated on the throne at the side of the damsel was the new Muslim. He was reciting:

“The Malaa’ikah will come to them from every door (saying): ‘Peace on you on account of your patience. Indeed, wonderful is the abode of the Aakhirah.’”

41. THE CONVERSION OF A YOUTH

Hadhrat Sulaimaan (rahmatullahi alayh) and Hadhrat Maalik Bin Dinaar (rahmatullahi alayh) were one day walking in the city of Basrah. They came upon a beautiful mansion. When they entered, they saw artisans and labourers working. An extremely handsome youth was issuing instructions regarding the building work which was in progress. Maalik Bin Dinaar said: “Just look how handsome he is and how enamoured he is with the construction of the mansion. I

pity him. I wish to make dua that Allah Ta`ala grants him sincerity and makes him a pious servant. He may become one of the youths of Jannat.”

They then went to the youth and greeted him. He responded, but he did not recognise Maalik Bin Dinaar. However, after some time had passed he recognised Maalik Bin Dinaar and stood up to honour him.

Now that he realised who his guest was, the youth was extremely hospitable. Hadhrat Maalik said: “How much money do you intend spending on this palace?”

Youth: “One hundred thousand dirhams.”

Maalik: “Why don’t you rather give all that money to me? I shall spend it where it is most needed and I guarantee you a palace more beautiful than this mansion. And not only a palace, but along with it, its furniture, servants, slaves, domes of precious stones and the soil will be saffron and musk. That palace will be vastly bigger and enduring than your mansion. In fact, it will be everlasting. No artisan ever set hand to it. It came into being solely by the Command of Allah Ta`ala.”

Youth: “Give me the time of this night. Come in the morning.”

Maalik (rahmatullahi alayh) agreed. Throughout the night, Hadhrat Maalik’s thoughts were occupied with the youth. He made dua earnestly and in profusion for the youth. As arranged the two went to meet the youth. They found him sitting at the entrance of his palace. When he saw Hadhrat Maalik, he became delighted and said: “Do you remember yesterday’s promise?”

Maalik: “Yes, I remember it. Will you do so?”

Youth: “Most certainly.”

The youth ordered bags of money and placed it in front of Hadhrat Maalik. He also called for paper and pen to be brought. Hadhrat Maalik Bin Dinaar wrote the agreement guaranteeing that Allah Ta`ala will give the youth a palace of the said description in exchange for the money. After completing the document, Maalik (rahmatullahi alayh) handed it to the youth. Maalik Bin Dinaar came away with the bags of money.

The entire day was spent distributing the money to the poor. By nightfall all the money had been distributed.

Forty days had not yet passed since the episode, when Maalik noticed on the mihraab one morning after Fajr Salaat, a document. When he examined it, he realised that it was the agreement he had written. On the reverse was miraculously written without ink:

“From Allah, The Mighty, The Wise to Maalik Bin Dinaar. You have been released from your obligation of the palace which you had guaranteed in Our Name. The palace and 70 times more have been awarded to the youth.”

Hadhrat Maalik Bin Dinaar (rahmatullahi alayh) stared at the letter in astonishment. Taking the letter he went to the residence of the youth. He was informed that the youth had died the previous day. Maalik Bin Dinaar sent for the person who had given the ghusl and asked him to describe the death of the youth. He explained as follows:

“Just before his death, he instructed me to give his body ghusl and to put on the kafan. He gave me a letter and told me to put in inside the kafan. I did as he had instructed, and buried him.”

Hadhrat Maalik showed the letter to the man. Spontaneously he exclaimed: “By Allah! This is that letter which I had placed inside his kafan.”

When this news spread, a young man came to Maalik Bin Dinaar and said: “I shall give you two hundred thousand dirhams. Write for me also a guarantee of such a palace.”

Maalik said: “Whatever had to happen has happened. Allah does as He pleases.”

42. BAHLOOL AND KHALIFAH HAROON RASHID

Khalifah Haroon Rashid once went for Hajj in great pomp and splendour. At one location in the precincts of Makkah Muazzamah, the cavalcade of Haroon Rashid reached the spot where the Majzub, Bahlool Majnoon who was well known to all, including the Khalifah, shouted loudly: “O Ameerul Mu’mineen! O Ameerul Mu’mineen! O Ameerul Mu’mineen!”

Pulling aside the curtain, Haroon Rashid responded: “Labbaik! O Majnoon! What have you to say?”

Bahlool: “O Ameerul Mu’mineen! Aiman Bin Ma-il on the authority of Qudamah Bin Abdullah Aamiri narrated that Qudamah saw Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) at Mina seated on a camel on which the saddle was of very cheap quality. There were no guards and servants accompanying Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) chasing and pushing people out of the way. Therefore, O Ameerul Mu’mineen! On this journey the acquisition of humility and meekness is better than pride and greatness.”

Haroon Rashid was touched by this admonition. He cried so much that his tears fell on the ground. He said: “O Bahlool! Admonish me more.”

Bahlool recited some poetry, the translation of which is:

“O my friend! Do not be deceived by luxuries

life is passing by and pleasures are depleting

when you carry the janazah to the cemetery

Then know that after it you will be carried (to the cemetery).”

Haroon Rashid cried more and said: “Bahlool! You have spoken wonderfully. Say something more.”

Bahlool: “O Ameerul Mu’mineen! The man to whom Allah has bestowed wealth and beauty, if he spends the wealth in Allah’s Path and saves his beauty from haraam, by Allah he is recorded in the roll of the Abraar.”

Haroon Rashid: “Bahlool! You have spoken correctly. You deserve a prize.”

Bahlool: "Give your prize to one who will accept it. I have no need for it."

Haroon Rashid: "Bahlool! If you have any debts, then inform me. I shall pay it."

Bahlool: "I do not want to exchange the Deen for my debts."

Haroon Rashid: "If you wish, a stipend will be fixed for you."

Bahlool: "Ameerul Mu'mineen! You and I are the servants of Allah. How can it be that Allah Ta'ala remembers you and forgets me?"

Hearing this, Haroon Rashid drew the curtain and the royal cavalcade proceeded.

43. HADHRAT SA'DOON MAJNOON'S NASEEHAT

Once when the Khalifah was proceeding for Hajj on foot, he met Hadhrat Sa'doon Majnoon (rahmatullahi alayh) - a Majzub - at a halting station prepared for the Khalifah along the route from Iraq to Makkah Muazzamah. Hadhrat Sa'doon recited some poetry of naseehat to the Khalifah. The translation of the verses is:

"Even if the world has complied with you, Maut will overtake you. What will the world then do? O searcher of the world! Beware! Leave the world for your enemies. Just as time has made you laugh, it will one day make you cry."

The impact of this naseehat on the Khalifah's heart was so profound that he involuntarily let out a loud shriek and lapsed into unconsciousness. He remained unconscious for a period of three Salaats. When he regained consciousness, Sa'doon (rahmatullahi alayh) was nowhere in sight. A search for him proved fruitless. Haroon Rashid was full of regret and sorrow.

44. SA'DOON MAJNOON'S DUA

Muhammad Sabbaah (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates: "Once there was a severe drought in Basrah. The people went to the outskirts to supplicate for rain (i.e. to perform Salaatul Istisqaa). When we arrived in the wilderness, we found Hadhrat Sa'doon Majnoon (rahmatullahi alayh)sitting. He asked: 'Why have you come?' When he was told of our purpose, he asked: 'Have you come with heavenly hearts (i.e. purified from worldly contaminations)?' We said: 'Yes!' He then instructed us to make dua. We engaged ourselves in dua until the sun had risen high in the sky, but there was not the slightest sign of rain. In fact, the sky had cleared further and the heat was burning fiercely. Sa'doon (rahmatullahi alayh) turned to us and exclaimed: 'O Jews! If your hearts had been heavenly, rain would have fallen by this time.'

He got up, made wudhu and performed two rakaats Salaat. Then he looked at the sky and said something which we could not understand at all. I swear by Allah! Even before he ended his supplication, the clouds gathered. Thunder and lightening struck and it rained in torrents.

We asked Hadhrat Sa'doon (rahmatullahi alayh) to explain what he had said when he looked at the sky. He snapped: 'Be gone!'''

45. MAALIK BIN DINAAR'S MEETING WITH SA`DOON MAJNOON

Hadhrat Maalik Bin Dinaar (rahmatullahi alayh) once met Hadhrat Sa`doon Majnoon (rahmatullahi alayh) in the wilderness outside Basrah.

Maalik: "How are you?"

Sa`doon: "O Maalik! You are enquiring of the condition of a person whose intention it is morning and evening to undertake an extremely difficult journey, but he has no provisions for the road. He has to appear in the Court of the King and Judge of all mankind."

Then he sobbed profusely.

Maalik: "Why are you crying?"

Sa`doon: "By Allah! I do not cry for any worldly desire nor for the fear of Maut and misfortunes. I cry because one day of my life had passed in futility. I did not practice righteousness on that day. Furthermore, the arduous journey ahead and the paucity of provisions make me cry. I do not know if Jannat or Jahannum will be my abode."

After Maalik Bin Dinaar heard these words of wisdom, he said: "People say that you are Majnoon (mad) whereas you are highly intelligent."

Sa`doon: "You too are trapped in the deception of people who think I am mad. There is no insanity in me. However, the love of my Maula (Allah Ta`ala) has permeated my every vein and bone. My blood is saturated with Divine Love. On account of this Muhabbat (love) I am in the state of bewilderment."

Maalik: "O Sa`doon! Why do you not associate with people?"

Sa`doon, in response, recited two verse which mean:

"O Beloved One! Dissociate from people

Take Allah Ta`ala for your friend and companion

Test people in any way you wish

In every condition they will appear as scorpions to you."

46. A YOUNG DEVOTEE OF ALLAH IN THE MADHOUSE

Ibn Qassaab Sufi (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates: "A few of us went to visit a madhouse. We saw there a young man who appeared extremely sad and grief-stricken. We were bewildered by his presence in the madhouse. We followed him in an endeavour to gain information about him. As soon as he observed that we were following him, he exclaimed: 'O People! Look at these people. They are all dressed and adorned with fine garments and fragrant with perfume. Yet, they left all work of the world and the Deen in pursuit of futility and an insignificant act. They attach importance to it. They are bereft of knowledge. They are not human.'"

Ibn Qassaab said: "If we ask you some questions, will you answer properly?"

He replied: "Ask, By Allah! I will answer perfectly."

Ibn Qassaab: "Who is the worst ingrate?"

The Youth: "The worst ingrate is a person who has been saved from a calamity. Then he sees another person afflicted by this calamity, but he derives no lesson therefrom. On the contrary, he indulges in futility and sin."

Ibn Qassaab and his companions were profoundly affected by the youth's words of wisdom and admonition. When they questioned the youth about some praiseworthy spiritual attributes, he said: "That does not conform with your state."

He then sobbed and supplicated to Allah Ta'ala: "O Allah! If you do not return my sanity, at least give me sufficient strength to enable me to slap each one of these people."

On hearing this Ibn Qassaab (rahmatullahi alayh) and his companions quickly disappeared from the scene.

47. A COMPANION OF JANNAT

Hadhrat Abdul Waahid Bin Zaid (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates: "On three nights in succession I supplicated to Allah Ta'ala to show me the person who will be my close companion in Jannat. I was informed (by way of ilhaam): 'O Abdul Waahid! Your companion in Jannat will be Maimoonah Saudaa.' I supplicated to be informed of her whereabouts. It was inspired to me that she was a member of a certain tribe in Kufaa.

I set off for Kufaa. When I reached there, I met members of her tribe and made enquiries about her. I was told that she was a mad woman tending to goats in the forest. When I reached the place shown to me, I saw a woman engaged in Salaat. A wonderful scene met my eyes. Among the grazing goats were some wolves just as docile as the goats. Neither did the wolves attack the goats nor were the goats scared of the wolves. I made Salaam and she quickly ended her Salaat. As she completed her Salaat, she said: 'O Ibn Zaid! Go away now. This is not the promised time.' I said: 'Who informed you that I am Ibn Zaid?'

She said: 'Do you not know that according to the Hadith all the armies of the souls had once been assembled together. Those who recognised one another in that realm have a mutual affection in this world while those who had developed no affinity there, remain strangers even here?'

I said: 'Give me some naseehat'

She said: 'Allah Ta'ala eliminates the love of solitude with Him and His Proximity from a person who engrosses in the pursuit of a worldly bounty which Allah Ta'ala had bestowed to him. Allah Ta'ala puts a wild fear (wahshat) in his heart.'

I asked: 'How do the goats and wolves live in harmony?'

She said: 'Be gone! Don't ask such questions. I have made peace with my Maula (Friend, Allah Ta'ala). He has thus created harmony between the goats and the wolves.'"

48. THE DIVINE LOVE OF A MAJNOONAH

Once when Hadhrat Utbah (rahmatullahi alayh) wandered on the outskirts of Basrah, he came upon a community of Bedouins living in tents. They were a community of farmers. In one of the tents he saw a girl who was apparently mad (majnoonah). She was wearing a woollen cloak on which was inscribed: ‘This slave-girl will neither be sold nor bought.’

Utbah went near and made Salaam, but she did not reply. After a few moments she recited some verses of Divine Love and admonition. Hadhrat Utbah said to her: “Whose farm is this?” She replied: “If it remains safe and sound it will be our farm.”

Utbah then went to another tent. Suddenly there was a destructive downpour of rain which ruined the farm. Hadhrat Utbah thought: “Today, I shall see what this Majnoonah has to say about this rain.”

When he came out of the tent he observed that the entire crop was destroyed and underwater. The girl was standing outside and saying: “I swear by that Being Who has given me the pure wine of His Love! My heart is contented with You.”

She turned to Utbah and said: “O man! Look! It is He Who grew the farm. He sustained, nourished and developed it. He protected it. When it was ready for harvesting it, He destroyed it.”

Raising her eyes to the heaven, she said: “O Allah! All these people are Your creatures. Their rizq is Your responsibility. You do as You please.”

Utbah said to her: “How do you have so much sabr (patience)?”

She responded: “O Utbah! Keep quiet. My Creator is Independent. He is The Praiseworthy. Everyday I obtain fresh rizq from Him.”

Hadhrat Utbah (rahmatullahi alayh) comments: “Whenever I remember her speech, a sorrowful yearning grips me and I begin to cry.”

49. THE CONDITION OF A YOUTHFUL AARIF BIL-LAAH

Hadhrat Zunnun Misri (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates: “Some people informed me that there was an Aarif Bil-Laah living in Mount Lakaam. I developed an intense desire to meet him. When I reached the top of the mountain, I heard a voice reciting poetry of Divine Love in a heart-breaking tone. I went in the direction of the voice. Soon I came upon an extremely handsome youth. Divine Love had reduced him to a rake. He was exceptionally pale and lean. I made Salaam. He responded and recited more poetry of Allah’s Love:

‘I have blinded my eyes to the bounties of the world. O Allah! There is no separation between You and my soul. O Allah! When I remember You, my eyes remain ever awake.

When sleep desires to close my eyes, I see Your Grandeur in front of me.’”

The youth then said: “O Zunnun! Where are you and where am I? Why do you wander in pursuit of mad people? Why have you come?”

Zunnun: “What has made solitude beloved to you? What has induced you to wander in mountains and wilderness?”

Youth: "My Love and yearning make me wander in the wilderness and mountains. My burning Love has separated me from all people. O Zunnun! Do you derive pleasure from the words of insane people?"

Zunnun: "By Allah! I love the words of such persons. They bring solace and yearning to my heart."

Hadhrat Zunnun (rahmatullahi alayh) adds: "Then the youth disappeared from my sight. I never discovered what happened to him."

50. THE EFFECT OF ALLAH'S LOVE ON A YOUNG GIRL

Once while wandering on Mount Muqtam, Hadhrat Zunnun Misri (rahmatullahi alayh) heard a voice brimming with sorrow. When he went in that direction, he soon came upon a girl sitting on a rock. He greeted her. After responding to his Salaam, she said: "O Zunnun! What business do you have with mad people?"

Zunnun: "Are you truly mad?"

Girl: "If I was not mad, why would people say so?"

Zunnun: "What has driven you to insanity?"

Girl: "Zunnun! His Love has made me mad. His Shauq (yearning) has thrown me in bewilderment. The search for Him has plunged me in burning desire and restlessness.

Muhabbat (Love) is in the qalb; Shauq is in the fuaad and searching is in the sirr."

Zunnun: "Girl! Is the fuaad something apart from the heart?"

Girl: "Yes! Fuaad is the noor of the qalb, and sirr is the noor of the fuaad. The qalb loves; the fuaad yearns; and the sirr gains (the love)."

Zunnun: "What does the sirr gain?"

Girl: "It gains The Haqq (i.e. Allah Ta`ala)."

Zunnun: "How does it obtain The Haqq?"

Girl: "Zunnun! The obtainal of Haqq is without form. It is beyond description."

Zunnun: "What evidence is there in your claim of having obtained The Haqq?"

The girl broke down sobbing so much that she became unconscious. When she became conscious, she sighed with sorrow and grief. She recited some heart-rending poetry. She let out a chilling shriek and exclaimed: "Look! Truthful people depart in this way." She fell down unconscious. When Zunnun went to inspect, he discovered that she had died. Zunnun continues: "*I looked for something to dig the grave for her. Suddenly I saw that her body had disappeared. May Allah's Rahmat be on her.*"

EPISODES FROM THE LIVES OF THE AULIYAA PART 2

51. THE MAD LOVER OF ALLAH

Hadhrat Fudhail Bin Iyadh (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates: “Once I stayed for three days in the Jami’ Musjid of Kufaa. I neither ate nor drank anything. While I was sitting in this forlorn state, a mad man appeared at the entrance. He was carrying a large rock and a heavy chain was around his neck. Children were around him. The mad man began walking in the Musjid. When he came in front of me, he stared threateningly at me. I became scared and in my heart supplicated: ‘O Allah! You have kept me hungry and now You have appointed over me a man who will kill me.’

As I thought, the mad man was reciting the following poetry:

‘The palace of patience is a part of your disposition

If only I knew of an end for your patience.’

On hearing this, I became relaxed. My fear disappeared. I said: ‘O my master! If there was no hope, I would not have this patience!’

He responded: ‘Where is the abode of your hope?’

I said: ‘Where the reflections of the Aarifeen come to a rest.’

He said: ‘O Fudhail! Well said. Undoubtedly, the habitation of the hearts of the Aarifeen is reflection. Grief and sorrow are their homeland. I have recognised this sorrow, hence I derive solace from it. The intelligence of only the Aarifeen is proper. Their hearts are absorbed by Divine Illumination and their souls dwell in the angelic realms.’”

Hadhrat Fudhail says: “His rapturous words had such an effect on me that I remained there for ten days without food and water. Indeed, he who has developed dislike for people and love for Allah is most fortunate.”

52. HADHRAT BAHLOOL IN THE QABRASTAAN

Hadhrat Sirri Saqati (rahmatullahi alayh) once found Hadhrat Bahlool Majnoon (rahmatullahi alayh) sitting in the qabrastaan. Hadhrat Saqati asked: “What are you doing here?”

Bahlool: “I have cultivated the friendship of such people who do not cause me distress nor speak ill of me behind my back.”

Sirri Saqati: “O Bahlool! Are you not hungry?”

Bahlool: “Remain hungry, for hunger is of the signs of taqwa. Undoubtedly, the hungry will soon be satiated.”

53. THE WISDOM OF A MAJNOON

A Majnoon who in fact was a man of lofty intelligence was coming from the qabrustaan. Someone asked him: "From where are you coming?"

He said: "I am coming from a caravan that has camped here."

The person said: "Did you speak to them? What did you ask them and what did they say?"

The Majnoon said: "I asked them when they would be departing. They replied: 'When you come here.'"

54. THE SUPPLICATION OF A MAJNOONAH

Hadhrat Ataa` (rahmatullahi alayh) saw in the market-place a Majnoonah slave-girl being sold. He purchased her for seven Dinaar, and brought her to his house. After a part of the night had passed, he observed her getting up. She made wudhu and engaged in Salaat. While she was performing Salaat, tears were flowing abundantly and she was sobbing uncontrollably. She supplicated to Allah Ta`ala: "O Allah! I swear by Your Love for me! Have mercy on me."

Hadhrat Ataa` said to himself: "I now understand the type of insanity she had (i.e. the Love of Allah)."

He said to her: "Girl! Don't say so. Say - 'O Allah! Unto You is the oath of sustaining my love (for You).'"

The girl snapped: "Begone! Get away far! I take oath by Allah! If He did not love me, He would not allow me to sleep with pleasure and peace nor would He allow me to stand in His Presence."

In ecstasy she fell down and recited some poetry on Divine Love. She then exclaimed very loudly:

"O Allah! Our relationship until now was secret. People have become aware of it. Now call me unto You."

She let out a chilling scream and she presented her life at the altar of Divine Love. Her soul left this earthly body. May Allah's mercy be on her.

55. DISSOCIATION

A man asked a buzrug to teach him something which will benefit him. The buzrug said: "Flee from people and dissociate from them. You will then meet Allah Ta`ala. Your union with Him will then be perfect."

The man asked for more naseehat. The buzrug said: "Take hold of Sidq (truth) and taqwa (piety); abandon ujub (vanity) and riyaa (show); be dominant over the nafs and its desires. You will then reach your goal."

56. THE NASEEHAT OF HADHRAT SHAIBAAN MUSAAB

Hadhrat Zunnun Misri (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates: "In a cave in the mountains of Libnaan (Lebanon), I saw a buzrug whose hair and beard were completely white. The hair in his head

was filled with sand and he was extremely lean. He was immersed in Salaat. As he made the Salaam of the Salaat, I greeted. He responded with Salaam and again engaged in Salaat. He remained engrossed in Salaat until Asr. Then leaning against a rock he began the thikr of Subhaanallah. He did not speak to me. I said: "Hadhrat! Make dua for me."

Buzrug: "May Allah Ta'ala bestow His Qurb (Proximity) to you. Son! When Allah Ta'ala endears a man with His Qurb, He bestows four characteristics to him. (1) Honour without a family, (2) Knowledge without searching for it, (3) Independence without wealth, (4) Solace without Jamaat (i.e. peace and tranquility in solitude)."

He then let out a chilling shriek and collapsed unconscious. And so he remained three whole days. When he regained consciousness, he inquired from me the duration of his unconsciousness. He made Qadha of the Salaat of the past three days. After completing his Salaat, he made Salaam to me and prepared to depart. 'I said: Hadhrat, I have waited here for three days hoping to gain naseehat from you.' I started to cry. The Sheikh said:

'Befriend your Creator. Besides Him do not desire anyone. Only those who have befriended Allah are the kings of all peoples. They are the true and chosen servants of Allah.'

He then let out a scream and surrendered his soul to Allah Ta'ala. After some time had passed, a group of Aabideen descended from the mountain and attended to his burial. After they had buried him, I asked them to inform me of the Sheikh's name. They said: 'Shaibaan Musaab.' -rahmatullahi alayh."

57. THE SUPPLICATION OF A FEMALE DEVOTEE OF ALLAH

Hadhrat Zunnun Misri (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates: "Once while wandering in the desert I heard a voice supplicating: 'O Thou of Boundless Bounties! O Thou of Boundless Generosity! O Thou, The Eternal One! Strengthen the gaze of my heart with immersion in Your bewilderment. Permeate my resolve with Your Sublimity. O Thou of Boundless Munificence! Save me with Your Splendour from the paths of the proud and rebellious. Keep me as Your slave in both hardship and comfort. O Thou Who has brightened my heart! O Thou Who are my True Goal! Only You be with me in my resolve.'

Hearing this wonderful supplication, I went in the direction of the voice. Soon I came upon a woman who was like a burnt out coal, having been consumed by the fire of Divine Love. Allah's Love had melted her body. She was as lean as a rake. She was wearing a woollen dress and a scarf (orni) of mohair. I said:

'Assalaamualaiki!' She replied: 'Wa Alaikumus Salaam, O Zunnun!'. In surprise I said: 'Laailaha illallah! How do you know my name? Until today you have never met me.'

She said: 'Zunnun! My True Beloved has removed the veils of mysteries from me. He has eliminated the blindness of the heart. I therefore know your name'."

Hadhrat Zunnun then continues: "Repeat your supplication."

The woman said: "O Thou of Glitter and Brightness! Remove from me the evil of what I am perceiving. I am fearful of this life."

A few moments later she fell down dead. While I stood there bewildered and confused, an old woman appeared. Looking at the face of the dead young woman she exclaimed: 'All

Praises are due to Allah, Who has ennobled her.'

I asked: 'Who are you and who is she?'

The old woman replied: 'My name is Zahra Walihaanah. She is my daughter. She has been in this state of Divine Love for twenty years. People thought she was mad. But, the Love of Allah had reduced her to this condition.'"

Subhaanallah! A poet has beautifully described such people:

"They say! Love of your beloved has driven you to insanity.

The pleasure of life is known to only the insane."

58. A FEMALE DEVOTEE OF ALLAH

Sheikh Abu Abdullah Iskandari (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates:

"Once I wandered in the mountains in the hope of meeting a devotee of Allah from whom I could derive some spiritual benefit. In my wanderings I saw a woman walking and reciting poetry about the Love of Allah Ta'ala. I thought to myself: 'It would have been good if I had met a man.' As this thought crossed my mind the woman said: 'O Abdullah! Indeed, your heart is queer. How can a man who cannot even attain the ranks of a woman hope to meet men (i.e. Auliya)?'

I said to her: 'You have made a very bold claim!' She said: 'A claim without basis is unlawful.'

I said: 'What is the basis of your claim?' She responded: 'The basis for my claim is that my King and True Beloved is for me as I wish because I am for Him as He wishes.'

I said: 'If it truly is as you say, then produce fried fish immediately.' She retorted scornfully: 'You have indeed asked for something exceedingly insignificant. Why did you not ask that Allah Ta'ala bestows to you wings of Divine yearning so that you could fly to Him as I am doing.'

So saying, she flew into the air."

Abu Abdullah continues: "I was smitten by remorse and embarrassment. Nothing at that time was more bitter to me than my contemptibility, and nothing sweeter than her elevated state of Divine Honour. I ran in the direction that she was flying and implored: 'O Sayyidah! I swear by that Being Who has enriched you and deprived me, Who has made you fortunate and me unfortunate! For Allah's Sake, assist me with some dua.'

She responded: "You need the dua of men. What need have you for women?"

Abu Abdullah: "At least cast a gaze (tawajjuh) on me."

The woman: "The lofty state in which I am immersed is infinitely superior to gazing at you."

Abu Abdullah: "Please, only two words of dua."

The woman: "Tomorrow morning you will meet a man whose dua is readily acceptable."

"After saying this she disappeared. My peace was utterly destroyed. I passed the remaining part of the day and night in considerable distress and restlessness. In the morning I saw a man crawling on his knees. The signs of holiness were cascading from his glittering face. It occurred to me that this was perhaps the person the woman had mentioned. As I was thinking, he said: 'Yes! I am that person.'"

Abu Abdullah: "Hadhrat, make a dua so that I could reach The True Beloved."

The Buzrug: "O Abu Abdullah! You have been deprived from the dua of the one who had made no claim. You lacked the insight and spiritual vision for even recognizing Raihaanah Kufiyah (the name of the woman). Now I cannot make any dua for you until you have not met some insane persons. You will meet them tomorrow."

As he spoke, he disappeared into thin air. A mountain of grief, regret and sorrow descended on Hadhrat Abu Abdullah.

"The next day I heard a Qaari reciting in a sorrowful and heart-rendering voice. I was enraptured by his recitation. Abu Abdullah said: 'I give you an oath by that Being Who has bestowed to you this beautiful voice! Have mercy on my forlorn heart.'

A short while later there appeared on the scene a man who was immersed in Divine Love. He said: 'What do you want from such mad men whose tears never stop flowing? However, since you have been assigned to me for dua, I advise you to cling to insane persons and hold on firmly to the Sunnat of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).'"

Abu Abdullah: "Hadhrat, say something more."

He said: "Have mercy on yourself. Abstain from sins. Renounce the world. This world is most ungrateful. It drowns and destroys its lovers. It throttles the middle class and burns out the inferior ones. May Allah bestow His True Attainment to you and accept you among his devotees. Insha`Allah, He will not deprive you of the pleasure of His Vision."

59. REMEDY FOR HUBBE DUNYA

Hadhrat Muhammad Bin Raafi` (rahmatullahi alayh) was returning from Shaam (Syria) when he met along the road a youth wearing a woollen cloak and with a staff in hand. Hadhrat Muhammad Bin Raafi` asked him: "Where are you going?"

Youth: "I do not know."

Bin Raafi`: "Where do you come from?"

Youth: "I do not know."

Muhammad Bin Raafi` said to himself that the youth must be mad. He then asked: "Who created you?"

As the youth heard this, he turned so yellow as if someone had dyed him with saffron. He said; "That Being Who has made me so (changed my colour) has created me."

Muhammad Bin Raafi` said: "Brother, I am a brother (i.e. one who is on the spiritual path - Tariqat) do not become annoyed with me."

Youth: "By Allah! If I am permitted to dissociate from people I would flee to an inaccessible mountain or hide in a cave so that I may gain peace and be safe from the world and its people."

Muhammad Bin Raafi`: "What harm has the world done to you to warrant so much displeasure?"

Youth: "Its one crime is that we are unable to see its harms."

Muhammad Bin Raafi`: "Show me an act, which will enable me to gain the proximity (Qurb) of Allah Ta`ala."

Youth: "Brother! I have examined all acts of ibaadat. Nothing is more efficacious than dissociation from people. Nine tenths of all relationships is with people and one tenth is with the world. Therefore, the man who has gained the ability to live in solitude has gained control of nine tenths of his heart."

60. MADINATUL AULIYAA (THE CITY OF THE AULIYAA)

A buzrug narrates: "Once I saw nine Auliya at the Raudhah Mutahharah (The Holy Sepulcher) of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). When they began leaving, I followed them. One of them turned to me and sharply enquired: 'Where are you going?' I responded: 'I am accompanying you. I love you all and I have heard that a man will be with whom he loves.'

One of the group said: 'He cannot go where we are going. Only those who are forty years of age are allowed to go there.'

Another member of the group said: 'Let him come, perhaps Allah will grant him the fortune of going there.'

Thus I accompanied them. We traversed distance miraculously. Great distances were covered in the shortest time. Ultimately we reached a city which was built of gold and silver. The trees were extremely lush and the growth luxuriously dense. Beautiful rivers of crystal clear water were flowing. A wide variety of the most wonderful fruit grew in abundance.

We entered the city and ate of the delicious fruit. I kept three apples from that city with me. None of the Auliya forbade me from taking the apples. As we prepared to leave, I asked them about this city. They said that it is the city of the Auliya of Allah (Madinatul Auliya). When the Auliya desired to visit this place, the city is miraculously brought to them. They added: 'However, besides you to this day, no one under forty years had come to this city.'

When we reached Makkah, I gave one of the apples to a labourer. But he threw it away. My companions severely reprimanded me and told me to eat of the remaining apples whenever I felt hungry.

Finally I arrived home with one apple. My sister out of happiness hugged me and said: 'Brother, you brought a wonderful thing from your journey. Give it to me.'

I replied: ‘What wonderful thing of the world could I have found for you?’ She said: ‘Where is that apple?’

I had hidden it, hence I asked: ‘Which apple?’

She said: ‘Why conceal it from me? You had to struggle to gain admission while I was taken there at the age of twenty years. By Allah! I was called there without my desire.’

I said: ‘Sister, what are you saying? One of the buzrugs said that besides me, no one under forty years had even entered that city.’

She said: ‘Yes, this is the law for the Mureedeen and Ush-shaq. But the Muraad and the Mahboob are allowed to visit the city whenever they wish. But, nothing of the city pleases them. Whenever you desire, I can take you to that city.’

(Mureedeen, Ush-shaq, Muraad, Mahboob - these are classes of the Muhibbeen (lovers) of Allah Ta’ala).

I said: ‘Show me the city now!’

My sister issued a command. ‘By Allah! To my astonishment, I beheld with my eyes that very same city. I saw the city inclining towards my sister. Stretching her hand towards the city, she said: ‘Now tell me where is that apple?’

The apple which I had hid above me fell on me.

After this wonderful experience, I understood my insignificance. I never had the faintest idea of the lofty states of my sister.”

61. THE GOAT OF MILK AND HONEY

Saikh Abu Raabi Maliki (rahmatullah alayh) narrates:

“I heard that in a certain city there lived a very pious lady. A karaamat (miracle) related to her induced me to visit her. The name of that Waliyyah (female saint) was Fid-dhah.

She had a goat which miraculously produced milk and honey. I bought a new mug and went to her. On reaching her home, I made salaam and said: ‘I wish to gain from the blessing of your goat.’ She presented the goat to me. When I milked the goat, truly, there came forth milk and honey. This wonderful episode left me bewildered. I said: ‘From where did you get this goat?’ Fid-dhah then explained the story of her goat as follows:

“We were very poor. We owned a goat and nothing else. When Eid came, my husband who was a pious man decided to make Qurbani of the goat. I requested him to spare the goat as Qurbani was not compulsory on us. Allah Ta’ala is well aware of our need of the goat. My husband approved my request, and the goat was not sacrificed.

Sometime thereafter, we had a guest. I said to my husband that Allah Ta’ala has commanded hospitality to the guest. It is therefore appropriate that we should slaughter the goat.

My husband took the goat behind a wall for slaughtering it. After some time I saw the goat

standing on top of the wall. I concluded that the goat had escaped from the grip of my husband. When I went to my husband I saw him skinning the slaughtered goat. I explained to him about the goat on top of the wall. He commented: ‘It is not surprising if Allah Ta’la has bestowed to us a better goat.’

We discovered that this goat gave milk and honey whereas the first one gave only milk. The woman said: ‘O my son! This, my goat, will effect your hearts. If your hearts are pure, this milk will be wonderful. If your hearts are polluted, the milk too will be contaminated. Therefore purify and adorn your hearts.’

62. THE MIRACLE OF A SAINTLY LADY

The son of a pious lady who was the disciple of Hadhrat Sirri Saqati (rahmatullah alayh) was the pupil of a certain muallim (Deeni teacher). One day the muallim sent the boy on an errand. Along the way the boy went to the river and drowned. The Muallim informed Hadhrat Sirri Saqati of the tragedy. Hadhrat Saqati together with some companions went to the home of the lady.

He first delivered a lengthy talk on the virtues of Sabr (Patience). The lady enquired: ‘Hadhrat, what is your motive for this bayaan?’

He said: ‘Your son has drowned.’

Lady: ‘My son?’

Saqati: ‘Yes, your son.’

Lady: ‘Never! Allah Ta’ala did not do so.’

Hadhrat Sirri Saqati reiterated the information and emphasised that the incident has been confirmed. The lady said: ‘If this is true, take me to the place where it happened.’

The whole group together with the lady went to the spot where her son had drowned. When the spot was shown to her, she called out: ‘O my child, Muhammad!’

Simultaneously, came the response from the river: ‘Mother! I am coming!’ The boy came dashing and splashing out of the water. His mother grabbed his hand and set off home with him.

Hadhrat Sirri Saqati bewildered and astonished by this wonderful episode, referred to Hadhrat Junaid (rahmatullah alayh) for an explanation. Hadhrat Junaid explained: “This woman has adorned herself with the commands of Allah Ta’ala. By virtue of her obedience, she has a special relationship with Allah Ta’ala. Whenever something regarding her has to occur, Allah Ta’ala informs her (by Kashf and ilhaam). However, she was not informed of the drowning of her son, hence she refuted it. She was therefore able to declare with the firmest conviction that Allah Ta’ala did not do so. May Allah Ta’ala be pleased with her and grant us roohani benefit by her virtue.”

63. ABU AMIR AND THE LETTER OF LOVE

Abu Amir Waa-iz (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates:

“Once when I was in Musjidun Nabawi, a man handed me a letter, the contents of which were as follows:

‘Brother! May Allah Ta`ala bestow to you the wealth of fikr (reflection) and the affection of ibrat (i.e. to take lesson). May He bestow success to you in the love of khalwat (solitude) and keep you ever alert against ghaflat (indifference, obliviousness).

O Abu Amir! I am one of your Brethren of Tariqat. I have been informed of your blessed arrival. This has delighted me. I am extremely delighted. If my eagerness could be transformed into physical shape it will form an umbrella above me. If it had to form under me, it would lift me. I implore you in the Name of Allah! Do not deprive me of the honour of kissing your noble feet. Was-salaam.’

After reading the letter, I accompanied the man. We walked on until we reached a very large dilapidated house in Quba. He requested me to wait outside while he entered to announce my arrival. He came back and told me to enter. The inside of the house was in a greater state of dilapidation than the exterior. Doors made of date-branches were fitted on the entrances.

I soon saw a very old man sitting in the direction of the Qiblah. Age and weakness had reduced him to a stalk. Fear and bewilderment permeated his being. Sorrow and grief were written on his blessed face. I went close to him and made Salaam. Observing him carefully, I discerned that he was blind and lame. Furthermore, he was the victim of a number of illnesses. Perceiving my presence, he said: ‘Abu Amir! May Allah Ta`ala maintain your heart pure from the pollution of sins. The flames of eagerness to meet you and listen to your blessed words of love have been consuming me. My heart suffers from an ailment. All physicians (spiritual doctors) have failed to cure it. I have heard that you have a life-saving balm. For the sake of Allah give me that elixir of life. I shall be patient regardless of its bitterness.’”

Abu Amir continues:

‘The talk of the aged man cast a fearful and shocking concern in me. After reflecting for a long while, the subtleties of his words dawned on me. I then said: ‘O Sheikh! Turn the vision of your heart for a while to the Angelic realm as well as your ears of Ma`rifat. Incline the Haqeeqat (Reality) of your Imaan towards Jannatul Ma`waa. The bounties and treasures which The True Benefactor has prepared for His Auliya will then be in front of you (i.e. their forms will be made manifest).

Thereafter turn your attention momentarily towards Jahannum. You will then observe the punishment and calamities Allah Ta`ala has in store for the evil ones.’

The Sheikh was shedding tears in profusion. He said: ‘Abu Amir! By Allah! Your medicine has benefitted me. I believe with conviction that your medicine will cure me. May Allah Ta`ala shroud you in the clouds of His Mercy.’

I said: ‘O Sheikh! Allah Ta`ala is aware of your secrets. He sees you in privacy and in public.’

The Sheikh let out a cry and explained: ‘Who can remove my poverty? Who can eliminate my starvation? Who can forgive my errors. O My Maula! Only You fulfill needs and only You are The Abode of Safety.’

The Sheikh then fell over. When I examined him, I discovered that he had departed from this world. May Allah have mercy on him.

A young girl donning a woollen dress and orni (head-scarf) approached. Her forehead glittered with the impression of Sujood (prostration). Fear of Allah had made her complexion exceedingly pale. She said: ‘O Balm of the hearts of the Aarifeen! O Igniter of the flames of Divine Passion! Congratulations! You have truly achieved a wonderful accomplishment. Your effort is acceptable by Allah Ta’ala. This Sheikh is my father. He has become lame performing Salaat for the past twenty years in this state (of Divine Love), and he lost his vision as a result of his abundant crying. He always supplicated to Allah Ta’ala to fulfill his yearning to meet you. He had said that once he had attended your gathering and you had instilled life in his dead heart. You had banished his ghaflat. He had also said: ‘If I should again listen to his talk, it would kill me.’ May Allah Ta’ala reward you wonderfully.’

Then she kissed her father’s forehead and shed tears in abundance. I said to her: ‘Why are you crying so much? Your father has journeyed to the Abode of Reward. He has seen the rewards of his righteous deeds.’

The girl screamed like her father and perspired profusely. Within a few moments, she too had traversed beyond the frontiers of this earthly abode. I performed the Janaaza Salaat for both.”

64. BAHLOOL AND A PIOUS LAD

Hadhrat Bahlool (rahmatullahi alayh) once while walking in the streets of Basrah came upon a group of children playing with walnuts and almonds. One child was sitting apart and crying. Bahlool thought that the boy was crying because he had no nuts to play with as the others were doing. Bahlool therefore asked:

“Why are you crying? I shall buy some nuts for you. You too can then play.”

Turning to Bahlool, the lad said: “We have not been created for play and amusement.”

Bahlool: “O son for what then have we been created?”

Lad: “To acquire knowledge and to worship Allah Ta’ala.”

Bahlool: “How do you know this? May Allah grant Barkat in your age.”

Lad: “Allah Ta’ala says: ‘What! Do you think that We have created you redundant and that you will not be returned to us?’”

Bahlool: “Son! You appear intelligent to me. Give me some naseehat.”

Lad: “The world is moving on. Be prepared for the journey. The world will not remain everlasting for anyone. No one will remain here. This worldly life and death are for men like two swift horses. The one follows the other. O you who are infatuated with the world! Renounce the world and prepare for the journey.”

The boy raised his head to the heaven and cried much. Tears were cascading down his cheeks like so many pearls. He recited some verses of Divine Love and fell down unconscious. Bahlool cradled his head in his lap and wiped the dust from his face. When the

lad opened his eyes, Bahlool said: “Son what has happened to you? You are still sinless.”

Lad: “Bahlool! Leave me! I have seen my mother kindle a fire. As long as she does not add small twigs and blades of dry grass the firewood does not ignite. I fear that I may be used as twigs to ignite the fuel of Jahannum.”

Bahlool: “Son, you are indeed intelligent. Give me some more naseehat.”

Lad: “Alas! I have stayed in neglect. Maut is following me. If not today, then tomorrow. The departure is certain. Of what benefit is it to conceal one’s body in fine and beautiful raiments. Finally this body will decay and be transformed into sand. The bedding in the grave is sand. Alas! All beauty will disappear with death. No sign of flesh and skin will remain on the bones. Alas! Life has passed and no goal has been achieved nor do I have any provisions for the journey. I shall be ushered into the Court of The Divine King with sins loaded on me. On earth I sinned under the cover of a thousand veils, but on the Day of Qiyaamah, all veils will be lifted. Everything is manifest to the Knower of the Unseen. Do we sin on earth fearless of Allah’s Wrath, or do we sin leaning on His toleration and forgiveness? He is the Most Merciful. If He wishes He will punish or forgive purely out of His Mercy and Kindness.”

Bahlool: “After the lad completed his lecture, I fell down unconscious. After regaining consciousness, I searched for the lad, but in vain. When I asked the other children, they said: ‘Do you not know that he is of the offspring of Sayyidunah Husain Bin Ali Bin Abi Taalib (radhiyallahu anhum).’”

Bahlool said: “I was indeed surprised. No wonder! He was the fruit of such a noble and wonderful tree.”

65. KILLED BY ALLAH’S SWORD OF LOVE

Hadhrat Maalik Bin Dinaar (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates:

“On my way to Hajj, I met a man who was proceeding on foot to Baitullah. He was walking delightfully, all in eager. He had neither food nor water nor any provisions whatsoever for the road. I made salaam to him. After he responded, I said: ‘O young man! From where are you coming?’”

Young man: “I come from Him.”

Maalik: “Where are you going?”

Young man: “To Him.”

Maalik: “Where are your provisions for the journey?”

Young man: “It is His responsibility.”

Maalik: “How can you traverse a journey without food and water?”

Young man: “Yes! When I set out from home, I had five huroof (letters) for provisions.”

Maalik: “Which letters?”

Young man:

Maalik: "What are their meanings?"

Young man: "Kaaf means Kaafi (i.e. He Who is Sufficient). Haa means Haadi (i.e. The Guide). Yaa means The One Who gives Refuge or place. Ain means Aalim (The Knower). Swaad means Saadiq (The Truthful One). The man whose companion is self sufficient, the guide, the giver of a place, the knower and the truthful, will not be destroyed. He has no fear and he is not in need of provisions."

Hadhrat Maalik Bin Dinaar offered his kurta to the young man. Refusing, he said: "O Sheikh! It is better to be without a kurta of the world. There will be a reckoning demanded (on the Day of Qiyaamah) for halaal things and punishment for haraam things."

When all the people donned Ihraam and proclaimed "Labbaik"! I said: "Don't you say Labbaik?"

The young man said: "O Sheikh! I fear to say Labbaik! Perhaps the Divine Response will be Laa Labbaik! Wa Laa Sa`daika! (Your presence is not accepted.)"

So saying, he left.

Hadhrat Maalik Bin Dinaar says: "Then I saw him again in Minaa. He was proclaiming; 'My Friend is He who loves that I be killed. For him my blood is lawful in the Haram. O you who criticize! Don't criticize me for His Love, for if you should see His excellence and beauty which I am seeing, you will never be saved (from death). Like me, you too will sacrifice your life at the altar of His Love. People have sacrificed animals on the Day of Eid, while my Friend has sacrificed my life.'

O Allah! People have gained Your Proximity by sacrificing animals. Besides my life I have nothing to sacrifice. I offer this life to You. You accept it."

He then emitted a loud, chilling shriek and fell down dead. A voice proclaimed:

"He is the friend of Allah. He has been killed by Allah. He has been killed by the Sword of Allah."

Maalik Bin Dinaar (rahmatullahi alayh) performed his burial. That night Hadhrat Maalik slept in great agitation and restlessness. In a dream he saw the young man and enquired about his condition. The young man said: "Allah Ta`ala treated me like the Shuhadaa of Badr. Infact, he gave me more."

Maalik asked in his dream: "Why did He give you more?"

Young man: "The Shuhadaa of Badr were killed by the swords of the kuffaar, whereas I was killed by the Sword of Allah's Love."

66. HADHRAT IBRAHEEM KHAWWAAS AND THE PIOUS LAD

Hadhrat Ibraheem Khawwaas (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates: "Once when I went for Hajj, the heat was intense. It was hotter than usual. Scorching winds were blowing. One day when we

reached in the middle of the desert in Hijaaz, I became separated from the caravan. Overcome with fatigue, I fell asleep. When my eyes opened, I saw a person at a distance. I quickly went towards him. When I reached him I saw that he was a small boy. His face glittered like the moon of the fourteenth night. I could discern the rays of spiritual jubilation on his face. I said: ‘Assalaamu Aalaikum, Son!’ He responded: ‘ Wa Alaikumus Salaam, O Ibraheem!’

I was amazed and I began having misgivings about him. I exclaimed: ‘Subhaanallah! How have you recognized me? We have never met before.’“

The Boy: “O Ibraheem! Since I gained recognition (of Allah Ta`ala), I did not remain ignorant, and since I was united (with Allah), I did not become separated.”

Ibraheem: “Why have you come into this wilderness in this intense heat?”

The Boy: “O Ibraheem! Besides Him, I have not befriended anyone. I perpetually remain aloof from all people, and I am going to Him. I have proclaimed that only He is The Ma`bood.”

Ibraheem: “From whence do you obtain your food and water?”

The Boy: “It is my Friend’s responsibility.”

Ibraheem: “By Allah! I fear for your life in this intense heat.”

The Boy (Tears like pearls flowing down his cheeks): “O man! You try to terrify me with the hardships of the journey when in fact, I am proceeding to my Friend. Love has thrown me into restlessness and eagerness drives me along. Does a friend of Allah also fear? Thikr-e-Ilaahi suffices for hunger and shukr quenches the thirst. What if I am small and weak? His Love has taken me from Hijaaz to Khurasaan. (Today part of Khurasaan is in Afghanistan and part in Iran). You despise me because of my childhood. Whatever has to happen, will happen.”

Ibraheem: “By Allah! Tell me honestly what your age is?”

The Boy: “Twelve years. Why do you enquire my age?”

Ibraheem: “I am bewildered by your statements.”

The Boy: “Alhamdulillah! I have been given excellences over many special people of Imaan.”

Hadhrat Ibraheem Khawwaas continues: “I was truly astonished by his handsomeness and his sweet words of wisdom.

After some time the boy said: ‘O Ibraheem! The one whom the Friend abandons is in separation. The one who has acquired a share of obedience to Allah, he has reached the destination. O Ibraheem! You are separated from both roads (i.e. the Road of Divine Love and the road to Baitullah).’

Ibraheem: “Why am I so deprived? For Allah’s Sake, make dua that I link up with my

companions of the caravan.

“The boy looked towards the heaven and moved his lips. I became drowsy and lapsed into a deep sleep. When my eyes opened I discovered myself in the caravan. I do not know what happened to the boy.

Ultimately our caravan reached Makkah Muazzamah. As I entered the Haram Shareef, my eyes suddenly fell on a boy who was holding the cloth of the Kaabah and shedding tears in profusion. It was the boy I had met in the wilderness. After a while he went into Sajdah. I stood watching him. After some time had passed I went near and discovered that he had surrendered his life to Allah Ta`ala. May Allah Ta`ala be pleased with him. A state of intense grief and sorrow settled over me. I went to my place of residence to procure whatever was required for the boy’s burial. On my return, his body was no longer there. On making enquiries, I realised that no one had any information about the boy. No one besides me, had seen the boy. He was invisible to the eyes of others.

I returned to my residence and went to sleep. I dreamt about the boy. He was the chief of a large assembly of people. He was clad in the best of garments which were glittering on him. Its beauty is beyond description. I asked: ‘Are you not my friend?’ He answered: ‘Yes.’

I said: ‘By Allah! I had searched much to bury you. I had desired to perform your Janaaza Salaat.’ He said: ‘O Ibraheem! Know that The One Who had brought me out of my city; Who had instilled His Love in me and Who had separated me from my family - He attended to my burial and to all my needs.’

I said: ‘How did Allah, The Gracious treat you?’ He said: ‘I was ushered into His Presence and He said: ‘What is your desire?’ I replied: ‘O Allah! Only You are my desire.’ Allah said: ‘You are My true servant. I shall not conceal anything from you.’ I said ‘I wish that my intercession be accepted on behalf of the people of my time.’ Allah Ta`ala said: ‘Your intercession is accepted.’

In my dream the boy shook hands with me. My eyes then opened. In the morning I fulfilled the rites of Hajj, but I was extremely restless. The memory of that boy, grief and sorrow had settled over me. Then together with the other Hujaaj we commenced the return journey. Along the journey everyone was saying: ‘O Ibraheem! Everyone is wonder-struck by the fragrance of your hands.’”

This wonderful fragrance remained on Hadhrat Ibraheem Khawwaas (rahmatullahi alayh) for as long as he lived. May Allah’s Rahmat be on him.

67. HADHRAT IBRAHEEM KHAWWAAS AND THE JINN

Hadhrat Ibraheem Khawwaas (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates: “Once when I was on a Hajj journey, a strong urge in my heart constrained me to break away from the caravan. I left the main road and continued the journey walking. I walked continuously for three days and nights. I neither thought of food nor water. I did not even have any other need. Ultimately, I came upon an extremely luxurious and dense forest. Everything was green. Fruit trees and fragrant flowers were in abundance. There was a small pond of clear water. I said to myself: ‘This is Jannat.’ I was indeed amazed.

While I was in this state of bewilderment, I saw a group of people approaching. They were adorned in beautiful and shining garments. They came and surrounded me. All made Salaam

to me. In response, I said: ‘Wa Alaikumus Salaam wa rahmatullahi wa Barakaatuhu.’ The thought of these people being jinn crossed my mind.

One of the group addressing me said: ‘We have a dispute on a particular question. We are a community of jinn. We had heard the sacred Kalaam of Allah Ta’ala from Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). On the night of Uqbah we were honoured to be in his blessed presence. The blessed talk of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has separated us from all worldly affairs. Allah Ta’ala has bestowed this abode in the forest for us.’

I asked: ‘How far is this place from my companions?’ Hearing this, they smiled. One of them said: ‘O Abu Is’haq! This place is among the wonders and mysteries of Allah Ta’ala. Besides one human being, no one has ever come here. That man was among your companions. He came here and died here. Look! That is his qabr.’

He pointed towards the qabr. The qabr was on the banks of the lake inside a beautiful garden of exotic flowers which I had never seen before. The jinn said: ‘The distance between you and your companions is so many (months or years?).’ [The narrator of this episode could not remember the number of months or years which Ibraheem Khawwaas had mentioned].

Hadhrat Ibraheem Khawwaas asked the jinn to explain the story of the young man who lies buried in the grave. One of them said: ‘We were sitting here by the lake discussing about Divine Love when suddenly a man appeared and made Salaam to us. We responded to his Salaam and asked where he came from. He said that he came from Nishapur. When we asked him how long it took him to reach here, he said, seven days. We asked the reason for his journey. He said that he had heard the Kalaam of Allah, viz.:

“Turn towards your Rabb (i.e. inaabat) and submit (Islam) to Him before there comes to you the punishment, for then you will not be aided.”

We asked for the meanings of inaabat, Islam and athab in the context of this Aayat. He explained: ‘Inaabat means to turn away from yourself and become obedient to Him. Tasleem is to surrender your life to Him, and to understand that Allah is more entitled to your life than you.’

When he was about to explain athab, he let out a chilling scream and died. We then buried him here. May Allah be pleased with him.””

Ibraheem Khawwaas continues: “I went to his qabr. At the head-side grew dense bushes of beautiful flowers. On a tablet was inscribed:

‘This is the qabr of Allah’s friend.

Love killed him.’

On a page I found there was written the meaning of inaabat. I read and explained it to the jinn. They were very pleased and said that they now received a satisfactory answer to their question. I then became drowsy and fell into a deep sleep. When my eyes opened, I discovered that I was near to Musjid-e-Aisha (in Tan’eem). I still had petals of those flowers. They remained fragrant for a whole year. The petals thereafter disappeared mysteriously.”

68. THE DEATH OF TWO DEVOTEES

Hadhrat Ibraheem Khawwaas (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates the following wonderful encounter in the wilderness:

“Once along a Hajj journey on a night when the moon was shining brightly, I fell asleep. Suddenly I heard a voice calling: ‘O Abu Ishaq! I am waiting for you since yesterday.’ I went near and found a man excessively lean and weak. He was on the verge of death. Exotic flowers in abundance were all around him. I asked about his homeland. He mentioned a city. He added that he was a person of considerable wealth and rank. However, he yearned for solitude, hence he renounced all his worldly possessions to wander in the wilderness. He said: ‘Now I am close to maut. I supplicated to Allah Ta’ala to send a Waliullah to me. I hope that you are the answer to my supplication.’”

Ibraheem: “Do you have any parents?”

Young man: “Yes. I also have brothers and sisters.”

Ibraheem: “Do you wish to meet them?”

Young man: “I had no such wish, but today I remembered them. I desire to smell their fragrance. Wild animals of the wilderness took pity on me and brought me to this orchard.”

Hadhrat Ibraheem continuing his story said: “I saw a big serpent approaching with a fragrant flower in its mouth. It said to me: ‘Keep your evil away from him. Allah Ta’ala is aware of the condition of His friends and obedient slaves.’

I then became unconscious. When I regained consciousness I discovered that the soul of the young man had departed. I again fell into a deep sleep. When my eyes opened I was back on the main road. After completing Hajj, I went to the hometown of the young man. When I reached there, I saw a woman with a water-pitcher. She had a striking resemblance with the young man. When she saw me she said: ‘O Abu Ishaq! How did you find the condition of the young man? I have been waiting for you since three days.’

I narrated the whole episode and the young man’s statement, viz. ‘I wish to smell their fragrance.’ The woman screamed loudly and said: ‘Oh! The fragrance has already reached.’ She too collapsed and died. Soon a group of beautifully clad girls arrived on the scene. They attended to the burial of the woman. [The girls were mysterious servants of Allah Ta’ala of the Abdaal category]

69. THE HAJJ OF SIX HUNDRED THOUSAND

Hadhrat Abu Abdullah Jauhari (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates:

“Once I fell asleep on the Plain of Arafaat. In a dream I saw two Angels descending from heaven. The one asked his companion: ‘How many people performed Hajj this year?’

The second Angel: ‘Six hundred thousand. But the Hajj of only six was accepted.’

First Angel: ‘What has Allah Ta’ala done with those whose Hajj has not been accepted?’

Second Angel: ‘Allah is Most Gracious. Through the virtue of the six, Allah Ta’ala accepted

the Hajj of six hundred thousand. Allah bestows His Kindness to whomever He wishes.””

70. HADHRAT ZAINUL AABIDEEN

Once Hishaam Bin Abdul Maalik went for Hajj prior to his appointment to the Khilaafat. During Tawaaf, he struggled to kiss Hajar-e-Aswad. However, due to the huge crowd he was unable to do so. Precisely at the same time, Hadhrat Imaam Zainul Aabideen (rahmatullahi alayh), who was the son of Hadhrat Husain (radhiyallahu anhu) appeared on the scene. When the people saw him, they made way out of devotion and honour. Hadhrat Zainul Aabideen made Tawaaf in comfort and kissed the Hajar-e-Aswad without hassle or inconvenience. Hishaam looked on with awe.

[The Auliya are the true kings. While worldly kings rule people by force, the Auliya are the kings of the hearts of people. They rule by love and piety.]

Hadhrat Zainul Aabideen would spend the greater part of the night and the day in Salaat. When he would make wudhu, his colour turned extremely pale and he would tremble during Salaat.

71. THE FIRE OF AAKHIRAH

Once the house of Hadhrat Zainul Aabideen was on fire while he was immersed in Salaat. The people shouted: “O Son of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)! Your house is on fire.”

However, Hadhrat Zainul Aabideen was fully absorbed in his Salaat. He was oblivious of the fire and the shouts of the people. He remained engrossed in Salaat until the fire died out. When people asked him about his obliviousness, he said: “The fire of the Aakhirah has made me oblivious of the fire of this world.”

72. HADHRAT ZAINUL AABIDEEN’S DUA

“O Allah! I seek Your Protection from that my outward appearance be pious to people while my heart is corrupt.”

73. THE REASONS FOR IBAADAT

Hadhrat Zainul Aabideen (rahmatullahi alayh) said: “Some people worship Allah because of fear. This is the ibaadat of slaves. Some worship Him because of their desire for thawaab. This is the ibaadat of traders. Some worship Him in gratitude for His bounties. This is the ibaadat of freed slaves.”

74. CHARITY IN CONCEALMENT

Many poor and destitute people were obtaining their needs without being aware of the benefactor. Hadhrat Zainul Aabideen (rahmatullahi alayh) exercised great care to conceal his acts of charity. He arranged for his charitable contributions to be delivered to the poor during the night.

He concealed his charity so much that some people being unaware of his generosity branded him a miser. Only when he died, was it discovered that a hundred families were secretly supported by him. These families too were not aware who their benefactor was while Hadhrat Zainul Aabideen (rahmatullahi alayh) was alive.

75. REFRAIN FROM THE FRIENDSHIP OF FOUR PERSONS

Hadhrat Baqir (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates: “My father (Hadhrat Zainul Aabideen) instructed me not to associate with four types of people. (1) A fasiq. He will betray you for a morsel of food.

(2) A liar. He will deceive you.

(3) A stupid man. He will harm you even if he does something with a good intention.

(4) A person who severs family ties. He is described as a Ma’loon (accursed) in three places in the Qur`aan Shareef.”

76. HADHRAT ZAINUL AABIDEEN’S TOLERATION

Once a slave of Hadhrat Zainul Aabideen (rahmatullahi alayh) was bringing a pot of steaming hot food from the stove for the guests. The pot accidentally fell from the slave’s hands onto Imam Zainul Aabideen’s baby son. As a result of the accident the child immediately died. Spontaneously Imam Zainul Aabideen set the slave free and commented: “He did not do it deliberately.” He then commenced preparation for the kafan and dafan (burial) of his son.

77. HADHRAT ZAINUL AABIDEEN’S GENEROSITY

Once Hadhrat Zainul Aabideen (rahmatullahi alayh) went to visit Muhammad Bin Usama. On seeing Hadhrat Zainul Aabideen, he broke down crying. When Hadhrat Zainul Aabideen asked him for the reason for his grief , he replied that he was in debt.

Hadhrat Zainul Aabideen said: “How much is your debt?”

Usama said: “Fifteen thousand dinar.” (Dinar is a gold coin)

Hadhrat Zainul Aabideen: “Payment of your debt is my responsibility.”

78. THE DUA OF HADHRAT JA`FAR

Hadhrat Laith Bin Sa`d (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates:

“In the year 113 Hijri I went for Hajj on foot. On reaching Makkah I performed Asr Salaat. When I climbed Mount Abu Qubais, I found a man immersed in dua. He was saying only: ‘Ya Rabbi! Ya Rabbi!’ He repeated this so much that his breathing became heavy. Then he said: ‘Ya Allah! Ya Allah!’ so much that it appeared as if his breathing had ceased. Thereafter he said: ‘Ya Hayyu! Ya Hayyu!’ in the same manner. Then he said: ‘Ya Rahmaan! Ya Rahmaan!’ in a similar way. His breathing stopped. Then he started to say: ‘Ya Raheemo! Ya Raheemo!’ Thereafter he recited: ‘Ya Ar-Raahimeen! Ya Ar-Raahimeen!’ seven times. Each time his breathing would stop. Then he supplicated:

‘O Allah! I desire grapes. Feed me with it. My clothes are torn.’

Just as he was terminating his dua, a very large bunch of grapes and two shawls appeared miraculously. He began eating the grapes. I said: ‘I too am your partner.’ He asked: ‘Why?’ I

said: ‘When you were making dua, I was saying Aameen!’ He told me to join him. I never in my life had ate such delicious grapes. I ate to my satiation, but the grapes did not decrease.

He told me to choose one of the shawls. However, I told him that I had no need for the shawls. He instructed me to go out of his sight as he wished to change. I hid myself and he clad himself with the two shawls. Taking the two old shawls he started to descend from the mountain. I accompanied him. When we reached a place called Sahi, we met a man who said:

‘O Son of Rasulullah! Give the shawls (i.e. the two old ones) to me.’

My Companion gave the man the two sheets with which he left. I followed him and asked: ‘Who is he?’ The man replied: ‘Hadhrat Ja`far Bin Muhammad.’

I searched for him , but could not find him.”

79. WHERE TO FIND SAFETY

Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri (rahmatullahi alayh) said:

“I heard from Hadhrat Ja`far Saadiq (rahmatullahi alayh) that safety has almost disappeared so much so that searching for it has become obscure. If there is safety in anything, it is in anonymity. If it is not in anonymity then it is in solitude, but this is not equal to anonymity. If it is not in solitude then it is in silence, but this is not equal to solitude. If it is not in silence, then it is in the discourses of the pious people of bygone times. A fortunate man is he who finds solitude in his heart.”

80. SHUKR

Hadhrat Ja`far (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates:

“Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that it is incumbent to make shukr (express gratitude) to Allah Ta`ala for the bounties he confers. In adversity (poverty, debt, etc.) recite Istighfaar and when afflicted by grief recite ‘Wa la haula wa la quwwata illa billahil azweem.’

81. A NOBLE YOUNG MAN

Hadhrat Shafeeq Balkhi (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates: “In the year 149 Hijri I set out for Hajj. I halted in Qadisiyyah. While I was viewing the large crowds and their pomp, my eyes fell on a young man clad in fine garments. He had wrapped a woollen shawl around him (in the style of the Sufis). He was sitting alone. I thought he was a pretender. I went near to him with the intention of reprimanding him. He looked at me and said: ‘O Shafeeq! Abstain from suspicion because some suspicion is sinful.’ So saying, he went away. I said to myself: ‘Indeed I had committed evil.’ He had said what was in my heart. He even mentioned my name. He appears to be a pious man. I resolved to locate him and apologise. Although I hastily pursued him, he was nowhere in sight. Then I saw him at Waaqisah, I was trembling and tears were flowing. I delightfully said to myself: ‘This is that same friend of mine.’ I was determined to seek forgiveness from him for my error of suspicion. I waited a long time. After he completed his Salaat, I turned towards him. When he saw me approaching, he said: ‘O Shafeeq! (He recited the Aayat)-‘Verily, I am Most Forgiving for him who repents.....’ He then departed and disappeared from my sight. I said to myself: ‘This young man is certainly one of the Abdaal. He twice revealed what I was thinking.’ When we reached Mina, I saw

the same young man standing at the well with a mug in his hand. The mug slipped from his hand and fell into the well. He lifted his gaze to the heaven and supplicated. By Allah! I saw the water rising to the top of the well with the mug. The young man filled it with water and engaged in Salaat. After Salaat he went to a sand dune and filled his mug with sand. He drank the contents. He repeated this act several times. I went up to him and made Salaam to which he responded. I asked him to give me some of the contents of his mug. he acceded to my request. I never drank anything sweeter and more delicious than the juice in his mug. Nothing was more fragrant than it. I stayed a few days at this place without feeling hungry or thirsty.

The youth said: ‘O Shafeeq! Allah’s zaahiri and baatini bounties are always with me. Cherish a lofty opinion of your Rabb.’

I then did not see the young man along the road to Makkah. Once at midnight in Makkah I saw him performing Salaat with profound humility. I heard the sound of crying. He spent the entire night in this state. In the morning after Fajr Salaat he made Tawaaf of the Kaabah. Thereafter he came out of the Haram. I followed him. Suddenly I observed many servants and assistants around him. People gathered around him to pay their respects. I was surprised at this transformation from a lonely young man to an important personality. When I enquired from someone, I was told that the young man, was Hadhrat Ja’far Saadiq (rahmatullahi alayh). I was truly astonished. Undoubtedly, the miracles which I had witnessed were the effects of such a noble Sayyid.””

82. THE KARAAMAT OF A WOMAN

A Buzrug travelling with a caravan passing through a wilderness saw an old woman walking in front of the caravan. The Buzrug thought to himself: “The old woman is keeping ahead so that she does not miss the caravan (and along with it the opportunity to beg from people).” He took some dirhams from his pocket and was handing it to the old woman. She stretched her hand into the air and brought it back filled with dirhams. She said: “You extracted dirhams from your pocket and I from the unseen realm.” She gave the dirhams to the Buzrug.

83. THE SUPPLICATION OF A DIVINE LOVER

A woman clasping the cloth of the Kaabah, supplicated: “O Thou Beloved of all hearts! Besides You, who is there for me? Have mercy on me. I have today come to visit You. I no longer have the strength to bear (this separation from You). My yearning for You has increased. My heart rejects every other love. You Alone are my desire and goal. When will I meet You? The bounties of Jannat are not my objective. I desire Jannat for Your Vision.”

84. THE KARAAMAT OF A SUFI

Sheikh Abu Abdur Rahmaan Bin Khafeef (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates:

“On my way to Hajj I entered Bagdad. I underwent considerable mujaahadah to banish from my heart everything besides Allah. I abstained from eating for forty days, nor did I drink a drop of water. I perpetually remained with Tahaarat. In this condition, I set out from Bagdad. In the wilderness I saw a buck at a well. The water had miraculously risen to the top. I too was extremely thirsty. But when I reached the well, the water had receded to the bottom. The buck had left. I too then left and lamented: ‘O my Rabb! To You I am not equal to even this buck.’

I heard a voice behind me saying: ‘We tested you. You had no patience. Now go and drink

the water. The buck came without bucket and rope, while you have with you a bucket and rope.'

I went to the well and found that the water had once more risen to the top. I filled my bucket. I continued making wudhu with this water until I reached Madinah, but the water remained the same.

After Hajj when I went into the Jami' Musjid of Baghdad, Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi's gaze fell on me. He commented: 'If you had exercised patience for a little while, the water would have gushed around your feet.'"

85. SALT WATER BECOMES SWEET

A Buzrug narrates: "Journeying on foot, through the wilderness, I saw a faqeer barefooted and bare-headed. The sheets covering his body were worn and tattered. He had no provisions whatsoever with him. I thought: 'If he had a bucket and rope with him, he could draw water from a well. This would have been better for him.'

Anyhow, I linked up with him.

It was intensely hot. I presented a cloth to him and asked him to shield his head with it from the blazing sun. But he remained silent and continued walking. After an hour, I said to him: 'You are bare-footed. It will be good if you put on my shoes for a while. We can take turns wearing the shoes.' He said: 'I can see that you like to speak much nonsense, have you not heard the Hadith:

'Of the beauty of a man's Islam is that he shuns nonsensical things.'

I said: 'Yes!' He remained silent and continued walking.

Soon I became very thirsty. Turning to me, he asked: 'Are you thirsty?' I said: 'No!' We continued walking along the sea-shore for another hour. By this time I was overwhelmed by thirst. Again turning to me, he asked: 'Are you thirsty?' I said: 'Yes! But what can you at this time do to help me?'

Taking my mug, he waded into the sea. After filling my mug, he presented it to me. Never had I drunk clearer and sweeter water than this."

86. THE YAQEEN OF A LAD

Sheikh Fatah Musali (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates: "I saw a minor boy walking in the wilderness. His lips were moving. I made Salaam and he responded. I asked: 'Son! Where are you off to?' He said: 'I am proceeding to Baitullah.'"

Sheikh: "With which words are you moving your lips?"

Lad: "With the Qur'aan."

Sheikh: "You are yet a minor. The laws are not yet incumbent on you."

Lad: "I am observing that Maut is claiming even those younger than me."

Sheikh: "Your feet are still small and the road difficult and long."

Lad: "It is Allah's responsibility to enable me to reach the destination."

Sheikh: "Where are your provisions and mount?"

Lad: "Yaqeen is my provision and my feet are my mount."

Sheikh: "I am asking about your food and water."

Lad: "O Uncle! If a person invites you to his home, is it proper to take food along to his house?"

Sheikh: "No!"

Lad: "My King is calling His servants to His House. The weakness of their Yaqeen constrains them to take along food, while I believe this to be highly disrespectful. Do you think that He will allow me to be destroyed?"

Sheikh: "Never!"

Sheikh Fatah continues: "The lad then disappeared from my sight. I saw him again in Makkah. When our eyes met, he said: 'O Sheikh! You are still dwelling in weakness as far as Yaqeen is concerned.'"

87. THE INCENTIVE OF SHAUQ

Hadhrat Shaqeeq Balkhi (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates that along the road to Makkah he saw a frail weak man crawling on his knees. Hadhrat Shaqeeq said to him: "From where do you come?"

Lame man: "From Samarqand."

Hadhrat Shaqeeq: "How long are you journeying along the road?"

Lame man: "Ten years."

When Hadhrat Shaqeeq stared at him in surprise, he asked: "O Shaqeeq! Why are you staring at me in surprise? My journey may be arduous and long, but shauq (yearning for Allah) is drawing me near. Certainly I am weak in body, but my Master is sustaining it and carrying it aloft. O Shaqeeq! There is no surprise when the Kind Benefactor is taking along the weak servant."

88. TALQEEN TO THE LIVING

[Talqueen is the Shaafi practice of instructing the deceased person in the lessons of Imaan. After burial, those who are at the grave-side recite the Talqueen formula in which the dead person is instructed to be firm, and to answer correctly the questions of Munkar and Nakeer, etc.].

Once in Makkah Muazzamah, Sheikh Najmuddin Isfahaani (rahmatullahi alayh) attended the Janaaza of a Buzrug. After the burial when the people sat at the grave-side and engaged in

reciting the Talqeen, Sheikh Isfahaani, contrary to his habit, laughed. He never used to laugh. When someone asked him the reason for laughing, he sharply reprimanded the enquirer. Thereafter, on some other occasion, he explained: “On that day I had laughed because when the people were engaged in Talqeen, the dead Buzrug from inside the grave said: ‘People! It is surprising that you are reciting Talqeen to one who is alive.’”

89. DEATH IN LOVE

Hadhrat Sheikh Muzani Kabeer (rahmatullahi alayh) says: “Once in Makkah my heart was overcome with fear and agitation. I therefore decided to go to Madinah Munawwarah. When I neared Beer-e-Maimunah. I saw a young man in his death throes. I said to him: ‘Laa Ilaaха illаlлаahu...’ He opened his eyes and said: ‘I am dying with a heart in love. Virtuous people die with the sickness of love.’”

He then died. Hadhrat Muzani gave him ghusl and after the Janaaza Salaat buried him. He said: “After completing the burial all fear and restlessness disappeared from me. I therefore, cancelled my journey and returned to Makkah Muazzamah.”

Allah Ta`ala brought Sheikh Muzani out of Makkah Muazzamah in this way for the burial of His devotee.

90. A MAN OF GREAT HONOUR

A Buzrug narrates: “A young man, always dressed in old tattered garments lived near to us in isolation. He never associated with anyone. As a result of his piety, there developed in my heart a love for him.

Once when I acquired two hundred dirhams from a halaal earning I went to the young man and placed the money on his musalla. I said to him: ‘I acquired this money in a halaal way. Use it for your needs.’

He glowered at me and rebukingly said: ‘I have purchased this state of solitude with Allah Ta`ala very cheaply, paying 70 000 dirhams during my time of affluence. Now you want to deceive me with this contemptible sum?’

He stood up. Throwing away the money, he walked away while the Buzrug bent over to gather the scattered coins. The Buzrug commented: ‘At that time while he was departing, I found him to be a man of the highest honour, while I viewed myself the most despicable man gathering the coins.’”

91. IN ONE NIGHT FROM MAKKAH TO MADINAH ON FOOT

A pious young man who was a resident of Madinah Munawwarah, once after presenting himself at the Raudah Mubaarak and reciting Salaam, saw a non-Arab leaving from the Holy Qabr of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). As he was leaving, the young man followed until they reached Musjid Zul Hulaifah. The Ajami (non-Arab) recited Durood and the Talbiyah. The young man did the same and followed. The Ajami turned and said: “What do you want?”

Young man: “I wish to accompany you.”

However, the Ajami refused. After pleading much with the Ajami, he said: “If you wish to accompany me, then follow in my footsteps.”

The young man delightfully accepted.

He says: “The Ajami left the usual road and wandered off into the wilderness. When a portion of the night had passed, we saw some lights in the distance. The Ajami said: ‘This is Musjid-e-Aishah (in Tan`eem).’”

The Ajami proceeded and the young man fell asleep. At the time of Fajr, the young man entered Makkah Muazzamah. After performing Tawaaf he went to Sheikh Abu Bakr Kitaani (rahmatullahi alayh). A group of Mashaa-ikh was with him. Continuing the story, the young man said: “After making Salaam, the following conversation ensued:

Sheikh Kitaani: ‘When did you arrive (from Makkah)?’

Young man: ‘I have just arrived.’

Sheikh Kitaani: ‘From where have you come?’

Young man: ‘From Madinah.’

Sheikh: ‘When did you leave Makkah?’

Young man: ‘Last night.’

(All those present stared at one another in amazement.)

Sheikh: ‘With whom did you come here?’

(The young man described the whole episode.)

Sheikh: ‘Your companion was Abu Ja`far Daamghaani. What you have narrated about him is in fact insignificant’

The Sheikh then instructed his companions to search for Abu Ja`far Daamghaani. He added:

‘O my son! I know that you are not capable of reaching Makkah Muazzamah from Madinah Munawwarah in one night. When you were walking, how did you feel the ground beneath your feet?’

Young man: ‘The ground had appeared like water - like a ship sailing on it.’”

92. SUPPRESSING DESIRES FOR ALLAH’S SAKE

Hadhrat Sufyaan Bin Ibraheem (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates:

“I saw Hadhrat Ibraheem Bin Adham (rahmatullahi alayh) sobbing in Makkah Muazzamah at the place where Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was born. This place is called Suqal Lail. I greeted him and recited Durood in that blessed place. I said to him: ‘O Abu Ishaq! Why are you crying in this place?’ He responded: ‘It is good to cry here.’

I visited this place again - twice or thrice - and found him in the same condition, sobbing. After I repeatedly asked him to explain, he said: ‘O Abu Sufyaan! I desired for the past thirty

years to eat Hareesah, but I applied pressure on my nafs and denied its desire. Last night I was overwhelmed by sleep. In a dream I saw a handsome young man with a green steaming mug in his hand. The fragrance of Hareesah was being emitted from the mug. I exercised control on my heart. The young man said: 'O Ibraheem! Eat this.' I said: 'I shall not eat something which I had renounced for Allah's Sake.'

The young man said: 'Will you not eat it even if Allah Ta'ala feeds you with it?'

By Allah! I had no reply other than to cry. The young man said: 'Eat - Allah will have mercy on you.'

I said: 'We have been instructed not to have any food with us.'

The young man said: ' Eat! Allah Ta'ala will overlook it. Ridhwaan, the over-looker of Jannat has given this (Hareesah) by the Command of Allah Ta'ala. He had ordered me: ' O Khidr! Feed this to Ibraheem. Allah Ta'ala has taken pity on his soul. He has exercised remarkable restraint. He has prevented himself from forbidden desires.'

The young man added: 'Allah Ta'ala feeds you, but you refrain! O Ibraheem, I heard the Malaa-ikah say: 'A man who refuses to accept what he had not asked for , will be denied when he asks.'

I said: 'If it is truly as you are saying, then I am in your presence. To this day I have not violated Allah's Pledge.'

Another lad appeared. He gave Khidr something and said: 'Put this in Ibraheem's mouth.'

Hadhrat Khidr then fed me until I woke up. When my eyes opened I had the taste of the food in my mouth and the colour of saffron on my lips. I went to the well and rinsed my mouth, but the taste and colour remained in my mouth.'"

Hadhrat Sufyaan said: "When I looked, I saw the impressions of the food and colour still in his mouth."

93. RENOUNCING A SON FOR ALLAH'S SAKE

When Ibraheem Bin Ad'ham had abandoned his throne, he had left behind an infant son. After the son attained manhood, he made enquiries about his father. His mother narrated the episode of his father's renunciation of the world and told him that his father was presently in Makkah Muazzamah. Four thousand inhabitants of Balkh accompanied the young prince to Makkah. When they finally reached Musjidul Haraam, the prince saw many durwaishes. When he questioned them about Ibraheem Bin Adham, they said: "He is our Sheikh. He has gone to gather firewood." The prince went to the outskirts where he saw an aged man with a pile of wood on his shoulder. This sight reduced the prince to tears. Controlling himself, he followed his father at a distance. When they reached the market-place, he heard his father exclaiming: "Is there anyone with wholesome money to purchase a wholesome product?" A man gave some bread in exchange for the firewood. Ibraheem Bin Adham gave the bread to his mureeds while he became engrossed in Salaat.

Ibraheem's teaching to his mureeds was to guard their gaze from young lads and females. Ibraheem and his disciples began making tawaaf of the Ka'bah. During the tawaaf, his gaze

fell on his son. Paternal love kindled and his gaze was momentarily fixed on his son. His mureeds were astonished. After tawaaf, they asked Ibraheem to explain the mystery of his conduct. He said: "When I left Balkh, I left behind a milk-suckling boy. That lad appears to be my son."

The next day a mureed of Ibraheem went to the caravan of Balkh. He found the young prince seated on a chair reciting the Qur'aan. The prince was weeping. The following conversation transpired:

Durwaish: "From where do you hail?"

Prince: "From Balkh."

Durwaish: "Whose son are you?"

The prince wept and said: "I never saw my father. Yesterday I saw a man, but I am not sure if he is my father. I fear that he may flee if I ask him. My father's name is Ibraheem Bin Adham."

Durwaish: "Come, I shall take you to him."

Ibraheem was sitting with his mureeds at Rukn-e-Yamaani when he saw the mureed approaching with his son and his wife (i.e. the queen, Ibraheem's wife). When the mother saw Ibraheem, she lost control, wept and said: "Son, that is your father." All the mureeds as well as others cried loudly. The prince fainted. When he regained conscious, he greeted his father. Ibraheem, returning the salaam, embraced his son and asked: "What Deen are you following?"

Prince: "The Deen of Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)."

Ibraheem: "Do you know the Qur'aan?"

Prince: "Yes, I know it."

Ibraheem: "Al-hamdulillah! Have you acquired any knowledge?"

Prince: "Yes, I have."

Ibraheem: "Al-hamdulillah!"

Ibraheem stood up and began walking away. But his son held on to him while his wife was pleading. Ibraheem lifted his face to the heaven and said: "O Allah! Set me free." Instantly, his son dropped down dead.

Later when his disciples asked for an explanation, Ibraheem said: "When I embraced my son, his love kindled in my heart. Immediately, a Voice reprimanded: "O Ibraheem! You are claiming to love Me but you associate with another being. You admonish your disciples to abstain from looking at boys while you look with love at your son and wife." I then supplicated: "O Allah! If his love will divert me from You, either take my life or take his life." The dua was accepted and his life taken."

Some Auliya have an extremely close relationship of Divine Love. They are on a different spiritual plane. Having abandoned the world and its pleasures in entirety, great trials are imposed on them in the journey of Divine Love. Just as Hadhrat Ibraheem (alayhis salaam) was called on to sacrifice his son, Ismaeel (alayhis salaam), so too are certain Auliya required to make great sacrifices for the treasure of Divine Love.

94. THE EFFECT OF THIKR

A Sheikh who was saved by Allah Ta`ala when he was overwhelmed by the love of a beautiful woman, saw Hadhrat Nabi Yusuf (alayhis salaam) in a dream. The Sheikh (in the dream) said: “O Nabi of Allah! May Allah Ta`ala keep your eyes cool. Allah Ta`ala saved you from Zulaikha.” In response, Nabi Yusuf (alayhis salaam) said: “O Blessed One! May Allah keep your eyes cool. You have been saved from the woman of the Tribe of Asfaan.” Hadhrat Yusuf (alayhis salaam) then recited very softly the following Aayat:

“Verily, for the one who fears the Rank of Allah will be two Orchards.”

A Buzrug commented:

“A man cannot save himself from the snares of the nafs by his own efforts. He is saved by the aid of Allah Ta`ala, from the evil of the nafs.”

Seek comfort from Allah. Do not attempt to seek comfort without Allah. Whoever derives comfort from Allah, has been saved. Whoever sought comfort by abandoning Allah, was destroyed.

The heart derives rest in the Thikr of Allah. Searching for rest besides Allah is a sign of perpetual ghaflat (obliviousness).

Sheikh Abu Abdullah Muhammad Bin Ali Tirmizi Hakeem (rahmatullah alayh) said: “The Thikr of Allah moistens the heart and cultivates tenderness in it. When the heart is bereft of Thikrullah, the heat of the nafs overtakes it; the fire of lust reaches it; the heart becomes barren and hard, and all the limbs refrain from obedience to Allah Ta`ala.”

Sheikh Abdullah Bin Fadhl (rahmatullah alayhi)said: “Lamentable is the condition of the person who goes through numerous difficulties and hardships travelling through the wilderness to reach his family at his home, but he does not cut asunder his nafsaani desires to reach the heart in which the signs of his Friend (Allah Ta`ala) are manifest.”

Sheikh Abu Turaab Bakshi (rahmatullah alayh) said: “Whoever turns away from Allah Ta`ala after being engrossed with Him (with His Remembrance), he will immediately become involved in the Wrath of Allah Ta`ala.”

95. MAKING A PLEDGE WITH ALLAH

A Buzrug set off for Hajj alone. He promised Allah Ta`ala that he would not ask anyone for anything. Along the journey he halted at a place. Some days passed by, but he obtained not even a morsel to eat. His physical weakness did not allow him to walk. He said to himself:

“This is an occasion of dire need which can lead to death. Allah Ta`ala, Himself has

prohibited self-destruction.”

When the Buzrug reasoned in this manner, he felt justified to ask for aid. However, as he resolved to seek assistance, an overwhelming spiritual force in him prevented him from asking for aid. He thus resolved: “Even if I die, I shall not violate my pledge with Allah.” The caravan in which he was travelling proceeded on the journey. The buzrug remained behind alone in his pitiful condition. He sat down facing the Qiblah in anticipation of Maut. Suddenly he saw a man on horseback standing by him. The man gave him water to drink and food to eat. He asked the buzrug: “Do you want to link up with the caravan?” The buzrug said: “Where is the caravan now? (i.e. the caravan is far ahead).” The man said: “Get up and walk a few steps.” After he walked a few steps, the man said: “Wait here. The caravan must be approaching.” Soon the buzrug saw the caravan approaching from the rear.

96. THE BENEFIT OF ABUNDANT DUROOD

A young man who was making tawaaf of the Ka`bah was reciting Durood Shareef in abundance. Someone asked if he experienced any effect of the Durood Shareef. The young man narrated the following episode:

“My father and I went for Hajj. Along the journey my father became ill and died. His face became black; his eyes became horribly contorted and his stomach bloated. I cried and said: ‘Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji-oon.’ I bewailed my father’s death in the journey and his condition. That night when I fell asleep, I saw in a dream Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) approaching my father. He rubbed his blessed hand on my father’s face. Immediately it became whiter than milk and glittered. He then rubbed his hand on my father’s bloated stomach. His stomach subsided and became normal. When Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was about to leave, I took hold of his blessed shawl and exclaimed: ‘O my chief! Who are you?’ He said: ‘Do you not recognize me? I am Muhammad, the Rasool of Allah. This, your father, was grossly disobedient and a sinner. However he recited Durood in abundance. I have therefore come to his aid when this calamity befell him.’”

97. THE REWARD OF SABR IS GOODNESS

A lady of admirable patience during the severe trials of misfortune which befell her related these trials as follows:

“My husband slaughtered a goat for Qurbaani. My two little sons saw their father slaughtering the goat. The elder of the two boys took his brother into the woods to demonstrate how his father had slaughtered the goat. He laid his brother down and slaughtered him. After he had realised what he had done, he ran into the mountains. A wolf attacked and killed him. His father set out in his search, but got lost in the desert and died of thirst. Meanwhile, after my husband had gone in search, I left my baby in the house and went to the door to see if my husband was perhaps returning. The infant crawled to the stove and upturned the pot of boiling water which fell on him. As a result of this incident, the baby died. When news of these disasters reached my eldest married daughter, she came in haste to me. When she heard what had happened, grief and shock overwhelmed her. She collapsed and died. Now here I am all alone.”

Someone said to her: “How are you able to bear all this grief?” She said: “Whoever is able to differentiate between sabr (patience) and panic will most assuredly find an avenue in between. The result of sabr is goodness. The one who panics receives no reward.”

98. IBRAHIM KHAWWAAS

Hadhrat Ibrahim Khawwaas (rahmatullah alayh) was overcome by excessive thirst along a journey in the wilderness. As a result of the extreme thirst he became unconscious. Somebody suddenly appeared and sprinkled water on his face. When his eyes opened he saw a very handsome and pious-looking young man standing by him with a horse. The young man gave Hadhrat Khawwaas (rahmatullah alayh) water to drink. He then instructed Hadhrat Khawwaas to accompany him. After a few minutes the horse-rider said: "Look ahead! What do you see?" Hadhrat Ibrahim Khawwaas said in surprise: "This is Madinah." The man said: "Get down. Convey my Salaam to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and say that your brother Khidr sends his salaams." He then disappeared.

99. THE FRUITS OF GENEROSITY

Hadhrat Sheikh Ali bin Muwaffiq (rahmatullah alayh) had performed more than fifty Hajj. He had asked Allah Ta'ala to bestow the thawaab of all his Hajj to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), Hadhrat Abu Bakr, Hadhrat Umar, Hadhrat Uthmaan, Hadhrat Ali (radhiallahu anhum) and to his parents. He had only one Hajj remaining to his credit. This particular year, standing on the plain of Arafaat, he supplicated:

"O Allah! If there is anyone here whose Hajj has not been accepted, award my Hajj to him."

That night while sleeping at Muzdalifah, he saw Allah Ta'ala in a dream, proclaiming:

"O Ali bin Muwaffiq! By virtue of your generosity I have forgiven the People of Wuqoof (the Hujjaj) as well as four times their number. And, I shall accept the intercession of each one of them on behalf of his family, friends and neighbours. I am The One of Holiness and Forgiveness."

100. A WALI'S INNOCENCE IS ESTABLISHED

Hadhrat Zunnun Misri (rahmatullah alayh) narrates:

"Once I was journeying in a boat. Alongside was seated a very handsome man with a noorani (glittering) face. When we were in the middle of the river, the owner of the boat discovered that his purse with all his money was missing. Although the young man was the prime suspect, everyone was searched.

When it was the turn of the young man to be searched, he leapt into the water which became like a solid board for him. He sat on the water and supplicated:

"O my Protector! People have accused me of theft. O Friend of my heart! Command all the animals of the sea in this area to surface with precious stones in their mouths."

Sheikh Zunnun Misri continues:

"Even before he completed his supplication, we observed a vast assembly of sea animals in front of the boat. In the mouth of every animal was a dazzling precious stone. The glitter blinded our vision. The young man then walked away across the water until he disappeared from our sight."

Hadhrat Zunnun (rahmatullah alayh) adds:

“It is for this reason that I took to travelling. During journeys sometimes the Auliya of Allah are met. I recall that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that there will always be three men whose hearts are like the hearts of Nabi Ibraheem (alayhis salaam). When one of them dies, Allah Ta`ala appoints another man to fill the vacancy.”

EPISODES FROM THE LIVES OF THE AULIYAA PART 3

101. SELF-ESTEEM (UJUB)

Hadhrat Ibraheem bin Khawwaas (rahmatullah alayh) narrates:

“Along a journey I suffered extreme hardship. Inspite of the severity of the hardship, I exercised patience. When I finally reached Makkah Muazzamah, I developed a degree of self esteem on account of the trials I had suffered.

An old lady called to me during tawaaf. She exclaimed: “O Ibraheem! I was with you in that wilderness, but I did not speak to you so that your attention would not be diverted from Him. Eliminate the thoughts from your mind.”

Sheikh Abul Hasan Izeen (rahmatullah alayh) said: “Once I travelled alone, bare footed through the desert. I thought that on this occasion no one had renounced the world and taken upon himself so much difficulties as myself. As this thought crossed my mind, a man grabbed me from behind and reprimanded:

“O miserable one! How long will your heart dwell in deception.”

[In such ways does Allah Ta`ala warn and protect His special servants from the snares of their nafs].

102. MA`RIFAT

A Buzrug said:

“Allah Ta`ala bestows ma`rifat to all His servants. He then grants them forbearance to suffer hardships and calamities in proportion to the degree of the ma`rifat He has bestowed to them.”

103. SHAM`OON’S PRESCRIPTION FOR WUSOOL-ILAL-LAH

[Wusool-ilal-lah means to link up with Allah Ta`ala].

Once when a buzrug saw Hadhrat Sham`oon (rahmatullah alayh) make tawaaf of the Ka`bah with great pleasure and ecstasy, he said:

“O Sheikh! How have you attained Allah?”

Hadhrat Sham`oon (rahmatullah alayh) fell down unconscious. After a short while, he regained conscious and said: “O my brother! I have imposed five acts on my nafs:

(1) I killed whatever was alive in me, viz. my carnal desires , and made alive that object which was dead in me, viz. my heart.

(2) I brought into my presence whatever was absent in me, viz. the Aakhirah, and I turned away from things which were in my presence, viz. the pleasures of the world.

(3) I perpetuated what I had believed was transitory, viz. taqwa or fear of Allah, and I destroyed whatever I had thought would endure, viz. my desires.

(4) I began to love things which people disliked and shunned.

(5) I fled from the things people love.”

104. RIZQ COMES TO YOU

Once Sheikh Abu Ya`qub Basri (rahmatullah alayh) remained in I'tikaaf for ten days in the Haram Shareef. He did not get a morsel of food in all this time. Finally hunger and weakness overcame him. He set out with the intention of obtaining some food. When he came to a desolate place (in the desert) he saw a decaying turnip laying on the ground. As he picked it up, a fear settled in his heart. It was as if someone was rebuking and taunting him:

“After starving for ten days, your reward is a rotten turnip”

Sheikh Ya`qub threw away the turnip and went to Musjidul Haraam. After some time a man appeared. Placing a bag in front of Shaikh Ya`qub, the man said:

“ This bag containing 500 Ashrafis (gold coins) is for you.”

Sheikh Ya`qub: “Why is it specially for me?”

The Man: “ I was on a voyage for ten days. The boat was about to sink. Everyone in the boat made a pledge to Allah Ta`ala, vowing to give some Sadaqah if he was saved. I vowed to give 500 Ashrafis to the first person by the Ka`bah on whom my eyes fell.”

Sheikh Ya`qub: “Open the bag.”

When the bag was opened, instead of Ashrafis, it contained some delicious varieties of foods. (The coins were miraculously transformed into food). Sheikh Ya`qub ate from the food and instructed the man to distribute the remainder among his children. Sheikh Ya`qub (rahmatullah alayh) said to himself:

“O nafs! Your rizq was coming towards you since the last ten days while you went in search of it to the wilderness.”

105. DIVINE LOVE

Hadhrat Sheikh Abu Bakr Kitaani (rahmatullah alayh) narrates:

"I was once in Makkah Muazzamah in the company of a group of Sufiyaa Kiraam who were discussing the question of Allah's Love. The youngest of the group was Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh). The Sufi's urged him to speak on this question.

Hadhrat Junaid (rahmatullah alayh) lowered his head and shed tears profusely. Then he said: "A lover is such a servant whose ego has been eliminated. He is absorbed in the thikr of Allah. He fulfils the rights of Allah. He looks with his heart towards Allah. The rays of Divine Fear have consumed his heart. The cup of Wine of Divine Love is for him. From behind the unseen veils Allah has become manifest to him. When he speaks, he speaks with Allah. When he moves, he does so with Allah's command. When he rests, he rests with Allah. He is constantly with Allah he exists with Allah and he is in Allah's companionship."

All the Mashaa-ikh shed tears in abundance and said: Can anyone say anything more superb? O Taajul Aarifin (crown of the Auliya)! May Allah increase your intelligence and wisdom."

106. A YOUNG WALI

Hadhrat Dhuhhaq Bin Muzahim (rahmatullah alayh) narrates:

"One Jumuah night I went to the Jami' Musjid in Kufa. Late in the night I observed a young man crying in the Musjid annex. I had no doubt that he was a Wali of Allah. I went near to listen to his dua. He was enwrapped in pleading with Allah Ta`ala. He poured out his heart with supplications of profound divine love. I too began crying.

I then made salaam to him and he responded. I said: "May Allah Ta`ala grant barkat in you and in your night. May Allah have mercy on you. Who are you?" He said: "Rashid Bin Sulaimaan." I recognized him from his name which I had heard earlier. I had already heard of his lofty spiritual states. I had yearned to meet him, but circumstances did not permit it. I was now overwhelmed with joy for my fortune in meeting him so easily and unexpectedly. I asked him to allow me to accompany him. He said: "How is it possible for a man who derives pleasure from Divine Communion to derive solace from association with people? I take an oath by Allah and say that if a Buzrug with a true intention has to come across the Mashaa-ikh of this age, he will say that they have no belief in Qiyaamah."

He then disappeared from my sight. I do not know if he went into the heaven or the earth. His departure filled my heart with intense grief. I made dua and asked Allah to allow me to meet him once more before my death.

After some years I went for Hajj. To my delight I saw him sitting in front of the Ka`bah with a group of people reciting the Qur'aan Majeed. When he saw me he smiled and said: "This is the kindness of the Ulama and the humility of the Auliya." He embraced me and shook hands. He said: "Did you make dua to meet me before your death?" I said: "Yes." He said: "All praises to Allah for this."

I said: "May Allah have mercy on you. Tell me of whatever you had seen or heard this night." He let out a loud shriek and collapsed. The people who were sitting around him reciting Qur'aan Shareef, departed. When he became conscious, he said: "O my Brother! What is hidden from you of the mysteries of Divine Fear and Awe which are in the hearts of the Auliya of Allah?" I said: "Who are the people who were with you?" He said: "They were a Jamaat of jinn. Because of a long standing companionship I was honoring them. They were reciting the Qur'aan Shareef to me. They accompany me every year for Hajj." Bidding

farewell to me, he said: "May Allah unite us in Jannat. There will be no separation nor fear, grief or toil." He again disappeared. I never again saw him.

107. TAKING FROM ALLAH AND GIVING TO ALLAH

An Aabid who lived near to the Haram Shareef fasted every day. Every evening a man delivered two bread to him. The Aabid dissociated himself from every one and was engrossed only with Allah Ta'ala.

One day it occurred to him that he was relying on the man for his rizq, not on Allah Ta'ala. He said to himself: "You have forgotten the One who is the Sustainer of the entire creation." When the man came with the bread, the Aabid refused to accept it. Three days went by but the Aabid had nothing to eat. He supplicated to Allah Ta'ala. That night he dreamt that he was in Allah's Presence. Allah Ta'ala said to him: "O My Servant! Why did you reject whatever I had sent to you with one of My servants?"

The Aabid: "O Allah! I derive no solace from anyone besides You."

Allah Ta'ala: "Who used to send the bread to you?"

The Aabid: "O Allah! Only You had sent it."

Allah Ta'ala: "From whom were you taking it?"

Aabid: "From You, O Allah!"

Allah Ta'ala: "Henceforth accept it and do not reject it."

Suddenly the Aabid saw the man who used to deliver the bread. He too was standing in Allah's Presence. Addressing the man, Allah Ta'ala said: "Why did you terminate the rizq of this servant?"

The man: "O Allah! You are fully aware."

Allah Ta'ala: "O My Servant! To whom were you giving?"

The man: "To You, O Allah!"

Allah Ta'ala: "Continue your practice and be firm. The thawaab for your practice (of delivering the bread to the Aabid) is Jannat."

[When charity is given, it is given in reality to Allah Ta'ala, and when accepted, it is taken from Allah Ta'ala.]

108. ALLAH PROTECTS HIS AULIYAA AGAINST PRIDE

Once Ahmad Bin Hawaari (rahmatullah alayh) accompanied Hadhrat Sulaimaan Daaraani (rahmatullah alayh) on a journey to Makkah Muazzamah. Their water bag was lost along the journey. When Ahmad Bin Hawaari informed Hadhrat Daaraani of the loss, he supplicated:

"O Restorer of lost things! Return our water-bag."

Shortly thereafter a man appeared with the water- bag and handed it to them.

The cold was intense. They were wearing heavy woolen garments. Soon they saw a man clad in only two light cloths. He was perspiring profusely. Hadhrat Daaraani (rahmatullah alayh) said: “If you wish, we shall give you some warm garments.” The man said: “Both heat and cold are the creations of Allah Ta’ala. If He commands, both will overwhelm me, and if He commands, both will leave me. I am wondering in this condition in this wilderness for the past 30 years. Never did I shiver because of the severity of the cold nor did I perspire because of the result of the heat of summer. In winter, the heat of my Divine Love keeps me warm and in summer its sweetness keeps me cool. O Daaraani! You are engrossed with garments and you have abandoned zuhd (renunciation of the world). The cold is therefore distressing you. O Daaraani! You cry, shriek and derive pleasure from cool breezes.”

Hadhrat Abu Daaraani (rahmatullah alayh) then departed. He said to his companions: “Besides this man, no one has recognized me.”[i.e. Only this Wali of Allah Ta’ala has understood my pride and vanity].

As a result of the dua of Hadhrat Daaraani, the water-bag was found. The almost immediate acceptance of his dua was likely to create in him the idea of his holiness and loftiness of rank. This would give rise to ujub and takabbur. It is of the ways of Allah Ta’ala to save his Auliya from the pitfalls of nafsaaniyat by bringing them into contact with such pious persons whose acts of piety put them to shame. They realise the insignificance of their own deeds when they view the deeds of other men of piety. In this way they are saved from pride and vanity.

109. A LAD’S TRUST IN ALLAH

A Buzrug narrates:

“Along the road to Makkah Muazzamah, I saw a lad walking with great delight as if he was walking in the yard of his home. I said: ‘O lad! What is the reason for this delightful style of walking?’ The lad said: ‘This is the style of the youthful servants of Allah, The Merciful One.’

I asked: ‘Where is your mount and food?’ He stared at me with disgust and said: ‘O man! If a weak slave who resolves to go to the house of his gracious master takes along food to his home, will the master not be offended? My Friend is the Being of Power and Grandeur. Since He has called me, He provides for me.’

The lad then disappeared. I never again saw him.”

110. THE HIDDEN AULIYAA OF ALLAH

Sheikh Abul Abbas (rahmatullah alayh) once asked Hadhrat Khidr (alayhis salaam) if he had ever met a Wali higher in rank than himself. Hadhrat Khidr (alayhis salaam) said: “Yes. Once I went to Musjid-e-Nabawi where I saw Sheikh Abdur Razzaq imparting Hadith lessons to a group of people. A young man was sitting aloof in another corner. I said to him: ‘Why don’t you join the class of Sheikh Abdur Razzaq. Young man, don’t you know that people are acquiring the knowledge of Hadith from Sheikh Abdur Razzaq?’

The young man ignored me. He did not even glance at me. He said: ‘These people are listening to Hadith from the Abd (The Slave) of Razzaq. While I am listening to Razzaq, not

from His slave.'

I said: 'If you are true in your claim, tell me who I am?' The young man said: 'If the firasat (insight) and understanding of the Mu'min is correct, then you are Khidr.'

Khidr (alayhis salaam) said: 'I then realised that there are servants of Allah with such elevated ranks whom I did not recognize.'

111. THE CURSE OF A WALI

A Buzrug said: "We were discussing the special favours Allah Ta'ala bestows to His Auliya. A blind man who used to listen silently to our talks once said:

'I derive satisfaction from your talks. One day I went to gather wood near to Baqi. I saw a youth clad in expensive attire and holding some pearls in his hand. I thought that this was an opportunity to gain some wealth easily. I ordered him to remove his garments. He said: 'Leave in the protection of Allah.' I repeated my demand three times. The youth said: 'Are you determined to take my clothes?' When I said 'Yes', He made a sign towards me with his two fingers. Both my eyes popped out and fell to the ground. In sheer panic, I shrieked: 'Who are you?' He said: 'Ibraheem Khawwaas.'

[Hadhrat Ibraheem Khawwaas - rahmatullah alayh- was one of the great Auliya of former times].

112. PUNISHMENT FOR DISRESPECT TO A WALI

Hadhrat Jurambeel Ya'fi (rahmatullah alayh) narrates: "A resident of Yemen related the following episode to me:

'I accompanied a Buzrug for Hajj. When we reached Jeddah, we hired camels for the journey to Makkah. We joined a caravan. Along the route the caravan was stopped by the tax-man of the Sultan of Makkah. He extorted taxes from the travellers. Only the two of us did not pay. The tax-man prevented our camels from proceeding. The Sheikh told him to release the camels, but the tax-collector refused and became abusive. The tax-man said: 'I take oath by my father's head that I will not allow you to proceed without paying the tax.' He had also by this time increased the amount. The Sheikh exclaimed: 'I take oath by my Protector that I shall not give you anything.'

The Sheikh then ordered the camel drivers to proceed. The caravan proceeded while the tax-collector remained riveted and paralyzed on his horse unable to move. He sent his slave to apologize to the Sheikh and pleaded to be released from the punishment. The Sheikh accepted his apology and the tax-collector was only then able to move with his horse.'"

113. CATEGORIES OF THE MUTAWAKKILEEN

A group of Fuqaraa (Pious Mendicants or paupers) came to Hadhrat Bishr Haafi (rahmatullah alayh). The following dialogue took place between them:

Hadhrat Bishr: "Who are you?"

Fuqaraa: "We are the residents of Shaam (Syria). We came to greet you. We intend to go for Hajj."

Hadhrat Bishr: "May Allah accept your Hajj."

Fuqaraa: "Do accompany us so that we all may perform Hajj in your companionship."

[Hadhrat Bishr -rahmatullah alayh- declined. However they persisted in their plea].

Hadhrat Bishr: "Since this is your desire, I agree to accompany you on three conditions:

(1) No provisions (food etc.) whatsoever should be taken along the journey.

(2) We should not ask anything from anyone along the journey.

(3) If someone gives us something, we should not accept it."

Fuqaraa: "The first two conditions are acceptable. But, if someone gives us something, and if we are in need, we shall be unable to refuse."

Hadhrat Bishr: "Perhaps you set off on this journey from your homes reposing trust on your food, not on Allah Ta`ala. Begone, all of you! Leave me alone in my state. Among the fuqaraa, three types are good.

(1) He does not beg for anything and if given something, he does not accept. This faqeer is among the celestial beings. He dwells with the purified souls.

(2) He does not beg. But if given, he accepts. A dastarkhwan will be spread for this type of faqeer in the Divine Presence.

[Dastarkhwan is a cloth (or tablecloth) on which the food has already been set out].

(3) He asks for food. If given, he takes according to his need. He only asks when necessary. He does not accept more than his need."

114. GARMENTS OF SINCERITY

A Group of sufis clad in woollen gowns of the Sufiyaa visited Hadhrat Bishr Haafi (rahmatullah alayh). He said:

"Fear Allah! Abandon this garb which is advertising you."

All remained silent. Then a youth among them spoke and said: "By Allah! We shall certainly don these garments. By Allah! We shall certainly don these garments. By Allah! We shall certainly don these garments until the entire Deen triumphs for only Allah Ta`ala."

Hadhrat Bishr commented: "Well said, O young man! Only men of your calibre have the right of wearing these garments."

Wearing the popular Sufi raiments had become a medium of ostentation (Riyaa). Insincere people had begun donning these garments to project the image of piety, hence Hadhrat Bishr (rahmatullah alayh) initially urged them to abandon this dress. However when he discerned the sincerity of the young man, he complimented him.

115. A BUCK IMPARTS THE LESSON OF TAWAKKUL

A Buzrug narrates: “I observed a faqeer in the wilderness by a well. He lowered his bucket into the well. The rope snapped and the bucket fell to the bottom. He stood there for a long time and supplicated: ‘I take oath by Your Greatness I shall not move from here without my bucket unless I be ordered to move on.’”

The narrator continues: “A thirsty buck appeared and stood at the well, staring inside. Soon the water bubbled to the surface. Along with the water came the bucket. Taking his bucket the faqeer lamented sadly: ‘O Allah! By You I am not the equal of even this she-buck.’

He heard a voice proclaiming: ‘O Miskeen! You came to the well with rope and bucket while the buck came with only trust on Us, having renounced all worldly means.’”

[A similar anecdote has been related earlier. Perhaps it refers to the same buzrug-or to someone else].

116. A WONDERFUL EPISODE

Sheikh Abdul Khair Aqta’ (rahmatullah alayh) narrated the following wonderful episode:

“Among the wonders which I had observed was a Habshi (Abyssinian) slave in the Jami’ Musjid of Tartus. He covered his head with his shawl and imagined himself making ziyaarat of the Ka’bah Shareef. When he opened his head, he found himself in the Haram Shareef at the Ka’bah.”

117. DIVINE PROTECTION

Hadhrat Abdul Waahid Zaid (rahmatullah alayh) asked Hadhrat Abu Asim Basri (rahmatullah alayh): “When Hajjaj sent his men to arrest you, what did you do?”

Asim Basri said: “At that time I was on the upper floor of my house. They had broken down the door and rushed inside. I pushed myself. Suddenly I was standing on mount Abu Qabees (in Makkah).”

Abdul Waahid Zaid: “How did food reach you there?”

Asim Basri: “The two bread which I used to get in Basrah, would be delivered to me by an old lady at the time of Iftaar.”

118. MIRACULOUS TRANSMISSION OF NEWS

When a certain Buzrug became ill, a cup with medicine appeared miraculously in front of him, he commented: “Today something new has happened on earth. As long as I am not apprized of it, I shall neither eat nor drink anything.”

After a few days it transpired that Makkah was invaded and a ferocious battle had taken place.

The narrator said that when I narrated this episode to Ibn Khatib (rahmatullah alayh), he commented: “It is indeed surprising.”

Sheikh Abu Uthmaan Maghribi (rahmatullah alayh) added: "This is nothing surprising." Ibn Khatib then said: "What is the news of Makkah today?" Abu Uthmaan said: "At this time the battle is raging between the followers of Talhah (radhiyallahu anhu) and the progeny of Hasan (radhiyallahu anhu). The followers of Talhah have appointed a Habshi slave as their commander. There is a red turban on his head, and the Haram today is overshadowed by clouds."

Ibn Khatib wrote to Makkah enquiring the events of that particular day. He was informed of the events in exactly the same way as Abu Uthmaan (rahmatullah alayh) had related.

119. FOR THE SAKE OF ALLAH

Sheikh Abu Ja'far Haddad (rahmatullah alayh), the Ustaadh of Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi had taken up residence in Makkah Muazzamah. Once his hair was overgrown. However, he had no money for a haircut. He went to a pious looking barber and said: "For Allah's Sake cut my hair."

The barber who was engaged in cutting the hair of a worldly man said: "With much pleasure I am at your service." The barber left the man and began cutting the hair of Sheikh Haddad. After the haircut, the barber gave him a few dirhams and said: "Use this for your other needs." Sheikh Haddad resolved to give to the barber whatever wealth he first obtains. When he went to the Musjid he met a man who said: "Your brother in Basrah has sent this bag containing 300 dinars (gold coins)."

Taking the bag, Sheikh Haddad went to the barber and said: "Accept these 300 dinars and use them for your needs and for spending in Allah's path." The barber responded: "O Sheikh! Have you no shame? You asked me to cut your hair for Allah's Sake. How can I now accept remuneration? You take it. May Allah forgive you."

120. DISGRACE FOR THE LOVERS OF WEALTH

Once Sheikh Shibli (rahmatullah alayh) debated with himself: "Am I a miser or not." He could not resolve his inner dispute. He pledged that whatever wealth he receives he would give it to the first faqeer he met. Even before completing his vow, a man appeared and presented 30 dinars to him. Taking the dirhams, Hadhrat Shibli set out in search of a faqeer. At the barbers shop he saw a blind faqeer whose hair the barber was cutting.

When Hadhrat Shibli offered the dinars to the blind faqeer, he said: "Give it to the barber." Hadhrat Shibli said: "These are dinars (i.e. gold coins)." The faqeer, raising his head, said: "Did we not say to you that you are a miser?"

Hadhrat Shibli then presented the dinars to the barber, but he said: "When this faqeer came to me, I pledged to Allah that I will not accept any fee." Feeling highly ashamed, Hadhrat Shibli flung the dinars into the river and commented:

"O wealth of the world! May Allah disgrace you like this. Whoever loves you, will be disgraced by Allah."

121. A CONVERSION OF A NASARA MONK

Sheikh Ibraheem Khawwaas (rahmatullah alayh) narrates:

“Once I journeyed across a wilderness where I met a Nasara (Christian) monk. He had a cross around his waist. He requested to accompany me. Both of us walked continuously for seven days. The monk said to me:

“O Devotee of the Straight Deen! Display some miracle. Hunger has overcome us.”

I supplicated in my heart: “O Allah! Do not disgrace me in front of this kaafir.”

Suddenly, there appeared miraculously a tray with bread, meat, fresh dates and water. We both ate and drank. Then we continued our journey. After walking for seven days, I hastily said: “O Christian worshipper! You also display some miracle. It is now your turn.” Leaning on his staff, he prayed. Two trays with twice the amount of food which was in my tray appeared. I was bewildered. However, I refused to eat. Inspite of his insistence, I declined to partake of the food. He then said: “Eat! I shall give you two glad tidings. One is the Kalimah Shahaadat.” He recited:

“I bear witness that there is no object of worship, besides Allah and I testify that Muhammad is the Rasool of Allah.”

The second glad tiding is my supplication: “O Allah, The Gracious! If there is anything in store by You for this servant, then open up the doors of Your Kindness.” (In consequence of his sincere dua, Allah Ta`ala had bestowed the treasure of Imaan to him).

Sheikh Ibraheem Khawwaas (rahmatullah alayh) said: “We both ate and drank. We then proceeded to Makkah. After Hajj we stayed a year in Makkah Muazzamah, and the Aabid (the former monk) died there. He was buried in Batha.”

122. A KARAAMAT OF IBRAHEEM BIN AD`HAM

Someone asked Huzaifah Mur`ashi (rahmatullah alayh): “What act of marvel had you seen of Ibraheem Bin Ad`ham (rahmatullah alayh)?” Hadhrat Mur`ashi said:

“We were along the road in Makkah for a few days. We had nothing to eat. We stopped at a desolate and dilapidated Musjid. Ibraheem Bin Ad`ham said: ‘O Huzaifah, I see that you are hungry?’ I said: ‘I see that you too are hungry.’

Then he wrote on a paper:

‘Bismillahir Rahmaanir Raheem. In all circumstances You are the Goal and in every way we are pointing towards You.’

He gave me the letter and said:

‘Go! Do not apply your heart to anyone besides Allah. Give this letter to the first person you meet.’

I took the note and left. When I saw a man on a mule, I gave him the letter. When he read the letter he cried. He asked me for the whereabouts of the writer. I directed him to the Musjid. He gave me a bag containing 600 dinaars. Meanwhile I met another man. I learnt that the man with the mule was a Christian. When I returned to Hadhrat Ibn Ad`ham with the bag, I explained what had transpired. He said: ‘Don’t touch the money. He will soon come.’ After a short while, the Christian arrived. Falling at the feet of Hadhrat Ad`ham (rahmatullah

alayh), the Christian embraced Islam.”

123. THE FRUIT OF TAWAKKUL

While travelling towards Makkah, Hadhrat Sheikh Abu Hamzah Khuraasani (rahmatullah alayh) fell into a disused well. He resolved not to call on anyone besides Allah Ta`ala. As he was ruminating, two men passed by the well. The one said to the other: “Let us close up this well so that no one falls in it.” They then closed the mouth of the well with a huge boulder. In fact, they obliterated every sign of the well.

Hadhrat Abu Hamzah says: “I intended to call to them, but decided against it. I said: ‘By Allah! I will never call to them. I will call only Him who is nearer to me than them.’ After an hour I observed the mouth of the well opening and a leg hanging down towards me. I heard a humming sound which appeared to me to mean: ‘Cling to me.’

I grabbed the leg and was hauled out of the well. Only then I saw it was a huge beast. A Voice proclaimed: ‘We saved you from destruction by means of something which destroys.’”

124. THE HEAD OF PRIDE

Hadhrat Ibraheem Bin Ad`ham (rahmatullah alayh), after having renounced the throne of Balkh worked as a caretaker in an orchard. One day a soldier who was passing by demanded some fruit. Hadhrat Ibraheem Bin Ad`ham refused. In anger the soldier struck him a blow to his head with his whip. Hadhrat Ibraheem, lowering his head, said: “This head had disobeyed Allah. Go ahead and hit it.” When the soldier realized who he was, he apologized profusely. Hadhrat Ibraheem Bin Ad`ham (rahmatullah alayh) said: “ I have left in Balkh the head which was in need of apologies.”

125. ATTAINING THE ELEVATED RANKS OF THE PIOUS

Hadhrat Ibraheem Bin Ad`ham said to a man who was making tawaaf:

“You will never attain the elevated ranks of the pious (i.e. the Auliya) as long as you have not traversed six difficult valleys. First Valley - The closing of the door of bounties and the opening of the door of hardship. Second Valley - Closing of the door of honour and opening of the door of disgrace. Third Valley - Closing of the door of comfort and opening of the door of toil. Fourth Valley - Closing of the door of sleep and opening of the door of wakefulness during the night. Fifth Valley - Closing of the door of wealth and opening of the door of poverty. Sixth Valley - Closing of the door of wishes and opening of the door of preparations for Maut.”

126. THE HONOUR OF A MUSTAAJABUT DA`WAT AFRICAN SLAVE

[Mustaajabut Da`wat- a person whose dua Allah Ta`ala readily accepts].

Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Mubarak (rahmatullah alayh) narrates the following interesting story:

“I was in Makkah Muazzamah during a severe drought. Rain had not fallen for a considerable period. The entire population -big and small- had gathered in Musjidul Haraam for Salaatul Istisqaa (to supplicate for rain). I too attended. I was in the vicinity of Baab-Bani

Shaibah when I observed an African slave entering. He had two very cheap shawls wrapped around his body. He sat in front of me in a concealed place. I heard him making dua as follows:

“O Allah! As a result of the abundance of sins and the misfortune of evil deeds, the faces of people have aged and changed. You have withheld Your rains of mercy from us to teach us and warn people. I ask You. O Thou, The One of Forbearance, O Thou, the One Who Procrastinates in Punishment! O Thou, The Merciful One! Your servants know nothing but goodness and kindness emanating from You. Bestow rain to Your servants this very moment.”

He repeated this supplication several times until the rain clouds gathered in the sky. Rain fell in torrents on all sides. The young slave remained supplicating where he was sitting.

I sat shedding tears. When he stood up and left, I followed at a discreet distance. When he entered the house I made a note of the building.

I went to Sheikh Fudhail Bin Iyadh (rahmatullah alayh). He said: “Why do you look so sorrowful?” I said: “A foreigner has surpassed us, and he has become the spiritual ruler and guardian.” In surprise, Sheikh Fudhail said: “What are you saying?” I narrated the whole episode of the Habshi slave. The Sheikh shrieked and became silent. He said: “O Ibn Mubarak! Take me to that young man.”

I told him that it was now late in the night.

The next morning after Fajr Salaat, I went to the house of the young man. At the entrance, was sitting a pious old man. He recognized me and asked me for the reason of my coming. When I informed him that I required a Habshi slave he told me to choose any of his slaves. He called a healthy and strong slave and exhorted me to take him, but I declined. Thereafter he called several slaves, one by one, but I refused them all. At last the slave I was looking for appeared. When I saw him, my eyes brightened and I requested to purchase him. The owner said: “I cannot sell this slave. His stay has brought blessing to this house. He never causes me any distress or inconvenience. He earns his own living. He weaves rope and earns enough for his food. Sometimes if he does not sell any rope, he does not eat on that day. He remains awake the whole night and he does not associate with anyone. I love him.”

Ibn Mubarak said: “How can I go to Sufyaan Thauri and Fudhail Bin Iyadh without fulfilling their need?”

The owner said: “Your coming here has indeed placed a heavy load on me. Take him for any price you wish.” I then purchased the slave and proceeded with him to the home of Fudhail Bin Iyadh. While walking the slave said: “O my master!” I immediately responded : “Labbaik!” (I am at your service!) He said: “Do not say ‘Labbaik’ in response to me. It is the duty of the slave to say ‘Labbaik’ when his master calls.” I said: “O my friend! What do you need?” He said: “I am physically weak and unfit for service. Besides me, my former master has shown you strong slaves.” I said: “May Allah never see me extracting service from you. On the contrary, I will purchase a house for you, get you married and be of service to you.” Hearing this, the slave sobbed much. When I asked him the reason for his crying, he said: ‘Undoubtedly, you have seen and become aware of my relationship with Allah Ta`ala, hence you chose and purchased me. For Allah’s Sake, tell me what have you observed of my condition.’

I told him that I had seen the acceptance of his dua, hence I chose him. He said: ‘If Allah wishes you too will become virtuous. There are people who are the beloved devotees of Allah. He reveals them to only His friends. Is it possible for you to wait for a short while? I have to perform a few rak’ats Salaat.’ I said: ‘The house of Fudhail is close by. Perform it there.’ The slave said: “No! I want to perform it here. It is not good to delay in the duties of Allah.”

He entered a Musjid. After completing his Salaat, he turned to me and said:

‘O Abdur Rahmaan! Have you any need?’ Full of concern, I asked: ‘Why do you ask this?’ He said: ‘I am leaving.’ I asked: ‘Where are you going?’ The slave said: ‘To the Abode of the Aakhirah.’

Smitten with grief, I cried: ‘Don’t do this. Allow me to be happy with you.’ He said: ‘ This life was one of happiness as long as my relationship with Allah was a secret. Now that you know and others too will become aware, I have no need for this life.’ So saying, he fell down and proclaimed: ‘O Allah! Take my soul this very moment.’

When I went to him in consternation, I found him dead. By Allah! Whenever I think of him my grief increases and the world becomes contemptible and disgraceful in my sight.”

127. A VIRTUOUS SLAVE GIRL

Sheikh Muhammad Bin Husain Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh) narrates:

“One day while wandering in the market-places of Makkah Muazzamah, I saw an old man holding the hand of a slave girl whose colour was extremely pale. She was weak and skinny, but her face was radiant with noor. The old man was offering her for sale. He exclaimed: ‘Who will purchase this slave girl for 20 dinars with all her defects.’

Sheikh Muhammad went near and enquired about her defects. The old man said: ‘This slave girl is insane. She is always full of sorrow. She worships throughout the nights and fasts everyday. She neither eats nor drinks. She always remains in solitude.’”

Sheikh Muhammad continues:

“When I heard this, my heart inclined to her. I paid the price and brought her to my home. The slave girl turned towards me and said: ‘O my little master, may Allah have mercy on you from which land do you hail?’ I said: ‘From Iraq.’

Slave girl: “The Iraq of Basrah or the Iraq of Kufa?”

Sheikh Muhammad: “Neither Basrah nor Kufa.”

Slave girl: “Perhaps you live in the City of Peace, Baghdad.”

Sheikh Muhammad: “Yes.”

Slave girl: “Wonderful! That is the City of Zaahids and Aabids.”

Full of surprise, Sheikh Muhammad said: "Girl! You who move from one room of the house to another, what do you know of Zaahids and Aabids?"

Turning towards her, Sheikh Muhammad jokingly asked: "Among the Auliya whom do you know?"

Slave girl: "Maalik bin Dinaar, Bishr Haafi, Saalih Muzni, Abu Haatim Sajastaani, Ma'roof Karkhi, Muhammad Bin Husain, Baghdaadi, Raabiyyah Adwiyyah, Sa'wanah and Maimunah. I know these Buzrugs."

Sheikh Muhammad: "How have you recognized these Auliya?"

Slave girl: "O young man! How can I not recognize them. By Allah! They are the doctors of the hearts. They show the lover the path of the Beloved."

Sheikh Muhammad: "Girl! I am Muhammad Bin Husain."

Slave girl (with delight): "I made dua to Allah Ta'ala, O Abu Abdullah, that He unites you with me. Recite to me the Qur'aan Shareef."

When Sheikh Muhammad recited "Bismillahir Rahmaan nir Raheem," She shrieked loudly and collapsed unconscious. Sheikh Muhammad sprinkled some water on her face. When she regained consciousness, she said: "O Abu Abdullah! This is merely His Name. What will happen to me when I recognize Him and see Him in Jannat? Recite more."

After Sheikh Muhammad had recited a number of Ayat, she said:

"O Abu Abdullah! I think you have proposed for the Houris of Jannat. Have you spent anything for their mehr?"

Sheikh Muhammad: "Girl! Tell me what is their mehr? I am a pauper." Slave girl: " To remain awake during the nights; to fast perpetually and to love the poor."

The slave girl then again fell down unconscious. Sheikh Muhammad sprinkled water on her face. She opened her eyes and began to make dua. While supplicating, she lapsed into a coma. When Sheikh Muhammad approached her, he was torn with grief to find her dead. He continues the story:

"I went to the market place to purchase kafan for her. When I returned, I was astonished to see that she was already draped with kafan. A heavenly green suit of two garments were on her body and a wonderful fragrance permeated her body. Two lines were miraculously inscribed on her kafan.

The one line read:

The second line was the Qur'aanic verse:

"Verily the Auliya of Allah - there shall be no fear on them nor will they grieve."

Together with my friends, we lifted her Janazah, performed Janazah Salaat and buried her. I recited Surah Ya`seen at the head-side of her grave. I returned to my home crying and overwhelmed by sadness. I performed two rak`ats Salaat and fell asleep. In a dream I saw the slave girl in Jannat sitting on a wonderful throne, adorned in the best of heavenly garments. Her glitter and beauty dazzled more than the moon and the sun. I said: 'O Girl! Wait a bit. Which deeds elevated you to your lofty rank?'

She said: 'Love for the fuqaraa, abundance of Istighfaar and removing harmful things from the path of Muslims. These deeds have elevated me to this lofty rank.'

128. THE CONVERSION OF A FAMILY OF FIRE-WORSHIPPERS

A former Majusi (Fire-worshipper) narrated the following story to a Buzrug.

"I had purchased a slave girl. I paid a huge sum for her on account of her intelligence , beauty and piety. She devoted herself to the worship of our god (the fire). I was enamored and in love with her.

One day a man of your religion (i.e. a Muslim) came to our home and recited something from your Scripture (Qur'aan). When the slave girl heard the recitation, she shrieked loudly. Her loud shriek instilled fear in us. She lapsed into a state of bewilderment. She would not answer when we spoke to her. She abandoned us and our god. She abstained from our food. During the night she would face the Qiblah and pray like you.

I sternly prohibited her, but she ignored all my warnings. The glitter of her beauty faded and her entire condition underwent a complete change. No longer did we derive any benefit from her, nor did we succeed in bringing any change in her.

One day when I came home, I saw the slave girl sitting on a chair and lecturing on the thikr and unity of Allah, and warning my family against fire-worship. She was praising Jannat. I was shocked to see her reviling our religion. I consulted with a friend who advised me to give a bag with some money to her for safe-keeping. I should then remove the bag from her custody without her knowledge. When she will obviously be unable to produce the bag on demand, I will then have a valid reason for beating her. He advised me to give her a thorough beating.

I followed the advice of my friend. When she had become engrossed in Salaat as had become her practice, I surreptitiously removed the bag. She was completely unaware. I then appeared and demanded the bag. She quickly went to the place where she had put the bag and brought it to me. I was dumb-founded. I could not believe it as I, myself, had taken away the bag. I now realized the truth of her religion. I had no doubt that the Deity she worshipped was indeed Almighty. We all- my friend, my family and I- embraced Islam.

We set the slave girl free in fulfillment of her desire. She spent her days in concealment absorbed in the love and worship of Allah Ta`ala."

129. TUHFAH, THE MISTRESS OF BARKAT

One night, the illustrious Buzrug, Hadhrat Sirri Saqati(rahmatullah alayh) was unable to sleep. His heart was inexplicably in a severe state of agitation and unrest. He was unable to even close his eyes for a moment. His agitation and depression even deprived him of Tahajjud Salaat that night. After Fajr Salaat he remained in the Jaami' Musjid listening to a lecture in

the hope of attaining some solace. But he says that he found the hardness of his heart having aggravated. He left and attended another lecture, but his agitation and unrest were not relieved.

He then went to a gathering of Sufis engaged in discussions of Divine Love, but it had no effect on him. He decided to visit the jail. Perhaps the sorrowful delight of the jail's inmates would soften his heart and eliminate the agitation. He narrates:

“When I reached the jail, my heart opened up. The hardness disappeared. I saw in the jail a beautiful slave girl clad in expensive garments. the fragrance of musk emitted from her. She appeared virtuous. However, she was handcuffed and had chains round her legs. When she saw me her eyes welled up with tears. She recited poetry of Divine Love. Addressing Allah Ta`ala, she said: ‘I swear by Your Truth! O Goal of my heart, I take oath in all truth. Even if You split my heart into bits, I shall never abandon You.’”

Hadhrat Saqati asked the warder about the slave girl. “Who is she?”

Warder: “She is a slave and insane. Her master has left her here hoping she would be cured.”

When the girl heard the words of the warder, she shed tears. Hadhrat Sirri Saqati said that the words of the girl made him restless. Her words had brought sadness to his heart and made him cry. When the slave girl saw his tears, she said: “O Sirri! You cry on hearing about His Attributes. What will be your condition when you recognize Him?” Then for a while she lapsed into unconsciousness. When she regained conscious, Hadhrat Sirri said: “O Slave girl!” The girl responded: “Labbaik, O Sirri!”

Hadhrat Sirri: “How did you recognize me?”

Slave girl: “From the time I had acquired ma`rifat, I never remained ignorant and was never indolent in rendering service. Since I was united I was never separated. The people of ranks recognize each other.”

Hadhrat Sirri: “I have just heard from you that you are in love. With whom are you in love?”

Slave girl: “He who has given me ma`rifat along with His beloved ones; He who has been most generous. He is close to the hearts. He is the Friend of the beloved who searches for Him. He hears and he knows. He is the All-Wise Creator, Generous and Gracious. He is Most Merciful and the Bestower.”

Hadhrat Sirri: “Who has imprisoned you here?”

Slave girl: “Those who are jealous.”

She let out a loud shriek and Hadhrat Sirri thought she had died. Soon she regained conscious. Hadhrat Sirri urged the warder to release her. The warder did so. Hadhrat Sirri said: “Go wherever you wish.”

Slave girl: “O Sirri! Where can I go leaving Him? Which is my road? The Friend of my heart has made His slave my master. Therefore, if my (worldly) master is pleased, I shall go away otherwise I shall stay here patiently.”

Hadhrat Sirri said to himself: “By Allah! She is more intelligent than myself.”

While he was talking to Tuhfah, her master came. Recognizing Hadhrat Sirri, the master conducted himself very respectfully.

Hadhrat Sirri: “She deserves to be more honoured than myself. What is her fault? Which do you dislike?”

Master: “She has many faults. She neither eats nor drinks. The stupid girl neither sleeps nor allows us to sleep. She is always grieving. For every insignificant thing she cries. Crying has become her occupation. All my capital has been wasted on her. I spent 20,000 dirhams in procuring her. I had great hopes of gain because, in addition to her beauty, she is a professional singer.”

Hadhrat Sirri: “For how long has she been plagued by these defects?”

Master: “Since a year.”

Hadhrat Sirri: “How did it begin?”

Master: “Once she was singing with the accompaniment of the harp. Suddenly without any explanation, she smashed the harp and threw it away. She got up shrieking and crying. I accused her of being in love with some man. But, my investigation did not support my allegation. When I asked her if she was in love with any man, she sharply rebuked me and said:

‘My Allah has spoken in my heart. He has brought me near to Him after I had drifted far from Him. He has chosen me. When I was called with love and pleasure, I responded. I became fearful of my past sins, but Divine Love drove away the fear, and cast me into yearning for Him.’”

Hadhrat Sirri: “I am liable for her price. I shall pay you. I shall give you more than her price.”

Master: “But you are a pauper. How can you afford her price?”

Hadhrat Sirri: “Do not be hasty. I shall bring the money.”

Hadhrat Sirri left them . He went home with a great weight on his heart, full of grief and worry. He was shedding tears in abundance. That whole night he supplicated to Allah Ta’ala. He could not sleep the entire night . He made dua:

“O Allah! You are the Knower, the Manifest and the Hidden. I trusted in your Kindness. Do not disgrace me in front of the girl’s master.”

While he was engrossed in his dua, someone knocked on the door.

Hadhrat Sirri: “Who is it?”

Stranger at the door: “A friend among friends.”

Hadhrat Sirri: “What do you want?”

Stranger: "The Command of Allah, The Merciful has brought me here."

Hadhrat Sirri opened the door. He saw a man with four servants. The stranger asked permission to enter. He then entered.

Hadhrat Sirri: "Who are you?"

Stranger: "Ahmad Bin Muthanna. The Being who is never miserly has enriched me. Last night while I was sleeping a voice ordered me to take five bags of gold coins (Ashrafis) to Sirri Saqati. Make him happy. He will purchase Tuhfah, the slave girl, because We have extended Our Kindness to her. In gratitude to Allah, I fell into Sajdah for having bestowed this bounty to me."

After Fajr Salaat, Hadhrat Sirri, holding Ahmad's hand proceeded to the jail. When the jailer saw Hadhrat Sirri, he exclaimed delightfully: "Welcome! Welcome! I heard a voice last night proclaiming that Allah's Kindness is for this slave girl."

When Tuhfah saw Hadhrat Sirri, tears flowed from her eyes and she sobbed: "You have publicized me to everyone."

Then, Tuhfah's master arrived. He was crying. His face was stricken with grief.

Hadhrat Sirri: "Don't be sad. I have brought the full amount you had paid for her plus 5000 dirhams profit."

Master: "No! By Allah!"

Hadhrat Sirri: "I'll give you 10,000 dirhams more."

Master: "No! By Allah! I will not accept."

Hadhrat Sirri: "20,000 dirhams more."

Master: "Even if you give me the wealth of the whole world, I will not sell Tuhfah. Tuhfah is free for the Sake of Allah Ta`ala."

Hadhrat Sirri (in bewilderment) : "What has happened?"

Master: "Last night I was severely reprimanded and warned. I have left everything and am fleeing to Allah. Allah is responsible for my sustenance."

Ibn Muthanna, by this time was shedding tears.

Hadhrat Sirri: "Why are you crying?"

Ibn Muthanna: "Allah is not pleased with me. Be witness that I am contributing my entire wealth in the path of Allah."

[He apparently arrived at this conclusion because his money did not achieve the emancipation of Tuhfah, the beloved Saint of Allah].

Hadhrat Sirri: "Tuhfah is indeed a noble Mistress of Barkat"

Meanwhile Tuhfah stood up and went into seclusion. She appeared with old simple garments, having removed the expensive clothes with which her master had adorned her. While they looked on, she cried and departed. As she was leaving , Hadhrat Sirri said:

"You have been freed, why are you crying?" She quickly moved on. They all followed. When they reached outside the prison confines, they found no trace of Tuhfah. She had simply disappeared. They set off in search, but in vain. Along the road, Ibn Muthanna died. Hadhrat Sirri and Tuhfah's ex-master set off for Makkah. After a long and difficult journey they reached Makkah Muazzamah. Hadhrat Sirri, continuing the story, says:

"One day while making tawaaf of the Ka`bah, I heard some outpourings of love from a wounded heart. The voice cried:

'The beloved of Allah is sick of the world. The illness is chronic. The cure is the illness itself. He has given her to drink the Wine of His Love. The lover is now intoxicated with that Love. There is no other Love besides Him. The Lover will remain in bewilderment until the goal of His Vision is attained.'

I went in the direction of the voice. When she saw me, she exclaimed: 'O Sirri!' I responded: 'Labbaik! Who are you? May Allah have mercy on you.'

She said: 'La ila ha illalla hu.' After recognition (ma'rifat) you have become a stranger. I am Tuhfah.'

She had become extremely lean and weak. She appeared like a phantom or a thought in the mind. I said to her: 'Tuhfah, from the time you had renounced the world, what bounties did you obtain from Allah Ta'ala?'

Tuhfah: 'He bestowed the love of His Proximity to me and he made me averse to everyone else.'"

Hadhrat Sirri: "Ibn Muthanna is dead."

Tuhfah: "May Allah have mercy on him. My Friend (i.e. Allah) has bestowed to him such bounties and honour which no eye has seen or no ear has heard of. In Jannat he will be my neighbour."

Hadhrat Sirri: "Your former master is with me."

On hearing this, Tuhfa's countenance became grave and she supplicated silently. I was full of apprehension. While I was staring at her, she turned towards the Ka`bah and collapsed.

With a heart shattered by grief, Hadhrat Sirri rushed to her. He found her dead. Tuhfah's master appeared on the seen. When he saw what had happened, the agony of his sorrow was unbearable. He fell forward. He too died where Tuhfah had expired. The sorrow of Hadhrat Sirri was beyond description. He arranged for her ghusl and burial. May the Rahmat of Allah be on them.

130. THE EFFECT OF THE QUR'AAN

Sheikh Ismaeel bin Abdullah Khuza-i (rahmatullah alayh) narrates:

“A man from the tribe of Muhaliyah came to Basrah on some business. A slave and a slave girl accompanied him. After completing his business he set sail in a boat for his home. As the boat was ready to depart, a young man in simple garments appeared on the shore of the river and asked to board. He offered the fee. The Muhaliyah man instructed the boatman to take the young man on board.

The boat sailed. When it was time for meals, the Muhaliyah insisted on the young man to join in the eating. After eating the Muhaliyah instructed his slave girl to pour some wine which he drank. A cup of wine was also offered to the young man, but he refused. The master instructed the slave girl to drink the wine. Thereafter she was ordered to sing. She produced a harp and began to sing. The Muhaliyah said: ‘Young man, can you sing as well as she?’

The young man said: ‘I can sing better.’

He began with Bismillah and recited the Aayat:

“Say, the benefit if this world is little. The Aakhirah is best for him who fears.”

He recited until

“Maut will find you even if you are in powerful forts.”

The Muhaliyah man threw his wine cup into the river and said: ‘I testify that this (recitation) is superior to the singing which I have just heard. Is there more besides this?’

The young man recited: The glory of Allah’s Kalaam had now settled in his heart. He threw the bottles of wine into the water and broke the musical instrument. He said:

‘Young man, recite some verses of glad tidings. ’

The young man recited:

“Say (O Muhammad!): O my servants who have committed injustice against themselves: Do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Verily He forgives all sins. Verily He is the Forgiver, The Most Merciful.”

Hearing this the Muhaliyah shrieked very loudly and collapsed. When the people rushed to inspect, they found that his soul had departed from this worldly abode. He was dead.

He was a wealthy and well-known personality. A huge concourse of people accompanied his Janaaza in his hometown.

Meanwhile the slave girl had undergone a change. She donned a simple dress of mohair. She fasted daily and spent the nights in ibaadat. She spent 40 years in this state. One night when she heard someone read an Aayat, she handed her soul to Allah Ta`ala and departed from this world. In the morning the people found that she had died.

The Aayat on which she sacrificed her life was: *“And say: The truth is from your Rabb. Therefore, whoever wishes, should accept Imaan, and whoever wishes should commit kufr. Verily, We have prepared for the Zaalimun (wrongdoers), a Fire whose walls will be surrounding them . And if they ask for help they will be granted water like boiling oil, that will scald their faces. Terrible the drink, and an evil dwelling.”*

131. THE FEAR OF ALLAH

A Buzrug narrates:

“In the wilderness of Bani Isra-eel (The Valley of Teeh). A man was seen wandering. Ibaadat had reduced him to a rake. He appeared like an old goatskin. I asked: ‘What hardship has reduced you to this state?’

He said with surprise: ‘The load of sins, the fear of Jahannum and the shame for the Almighty Sovereign.’”

132. THE GAZE OF THE AULIYAA

Sheikh Abdullah Bin Ahnaaf (rahmatullah alayh) relates that Isa Bin Yunus Misri (rahmatullah alayh) said to him:

“In a certain place you will find an old man and a young man. Both are perfect in their contemplation of Allah (i.e. muraqabah). If you just cast a glance on them, it will benefit you throughout your life. Do meet them.”

I journeyed to the wilderness where the two Buzrugs were. I was hungry and thirsty and I had nothing to protect me against the intense heat. I found them both sitting, facing the Qiblah, absorbed in contemplation. I greeted them and spoke, but they did not respond. I persisted and begged them to say something.

The old man said: ‘O son of Ahnaaf! How little intelligence have you! You are free of encumbrances, hence you came to disturb us.’

He then lowered his head and became absorbed in contemplation. I, however, remained in front of them. We performed Zuhr and Asr. My hunger and thirst disappeared. I said to the young Buzrug: ‘Give me some naseehat which will benefit me.’ He said: ‘We are in a calamity. Our tongues lack the ability for naseehat.’

I stayed 3 nights and 3 days by them. None of us ate anything during this time. On the third day as I resolved to speak to them, the young man said: ‘Be in the association of a man who reminds you of Allah when you look at him and you gain admonition (naseehat) from his actions, not from his speech.’ When I again looked both had instantaneously disappeared from my sight.”

133. INSAAN IN SHAITAAN'S OPINION

Hadhrat Abul Qaasim Junaid (rahmatullah alayh) narrating a dream he had seen said:

"In a dream I saw Iblees, the accursed, naked. I said to him: 'Are you not ashamed of insaan (human beings)?'

Iblees said: 'They are insaan by you, not by me. If they were human beings, I would not have played with them as children play with the ball. However there are insaan besides these people.' I said: 'Who are they?' Iblees said: 'In Musjid Shunuziah there are a few persons. Their ibaadat and piety have emaciated by body. The fire of my jealousy for them have roasted my liver. Whenever I think of doing anything to them, they point towards Allah Ta'ala. I am close to being ruined.'

Hadhrat Junaid went to the Musjid in the morning. He found three men sitting in contemplation. Their heads were tucked into their blankets. When they perceived that a stranger had arrived, one of them opened his head and said: 'O Abu Qaasim! Do not be deceived by the accursed Shaitaan.'

He then covered his head and became absorbed in meditation."

134. THE EVIL OF GHEEBAT

Sheikh Abul Qaasim Junaid (rahmatullah alayh) was sitting in the Musjid. He saw a healthy faqeer begging from people. He said to himself: "It would be better for him if he worked and earned his living instead of asking from others."

When Sheikh Junaid returned to his home, he found himself extremely agitated. He had no rest in his heart. With difficulty did he engage in ibaadat. He fell asleep in this state of turmoil. He dreamt that the body of that faqeer was placed in front of him and he was ordered to eat it. "You have made gheebat of him," said someone. I said: "I did not make gheebat of him. However, I said something about him to myself." It was said to me: "You are not amongst those who indulge in such contemptible things. Go and ask the faqeer to forgive you."

In the morning Hadhrat Junaid set out in search of the faqeer. He saw the faqeer picking some vegetable leaves from water in which people had washed their vegetables. After Hadhrat Junaid greeted, the faqeer said: "O Abul Qaasim! Will you search for the faults of the servants of Allah? May Allah forgive you and me."

135. THE DESIRE FOR A POMEGRANATE

The special Auliya of lofty ranks go to great lengths to deny even the lawful desires of the nafs:

Once while journeying in the mountains, Hadhrat Ibraheem Khawwaas (rahmatullah alayh) developed the desire for a pomegranate which he saw laying nearby. When he tasted it, he found it extremely sour. Leaving the pomegranate, he walked on until he came across a man laying on his side. A swarm of wasps was all over him. Hadhrat Khawwaas said: "Assala mu alaikum!" The man said: "Wa- alaikumus salaam, O Ibraheem!"

Hadhrat Khawwaas: "How did you recognize me?"

The man: “Nothing remains hidden from the one who has recognized Allah Ta`ala.”

Hadhrat Khawwaas: “I can perceive your special relationship with Allah Ta`ala. If you desire, you can supplicate to Allah and He will free you from these wasps.”

The man: “ I also perceive that you have a special relationship with Allah Ta`ala. If you wish, you too can supplicate to Allah Ta`ala to save you from the desire for pomegranates. The punishment of the pleasure of pomegranates will have to be borne in the Aakhirah whereas the stings of the wasps are only in this world.”

Understanding the divine reprimand, Hadhrat Ibraheem Khawwaas (rahmatullah alayh) proceeded on his journey.

[Eating pomegranates is lawful. However, the Auliya who enjoy lofty ranks of Divine Proximity and Maarifat have a different code of self-imposed ascetism. They deny even the lawful desire of the nafs in their pursuit for greater spiritual purity which is so necessary to gain the heights of Roohaani elevation enjoyed by the Auliya. Sometimes things which are lawful for the masses are unlawful for the special devotees of Allah Ta`ala.]

136. THE STATUS OF SIDDIQIYAT

[Siddiqiyat is the highest rank of wilaayat-sainthood]

A group of Sufiyaa was living in Baghdad. Among them was Hadhrat Ibraheem Khawwaas (rahmatullah alayh). Once an intelligent, wise, handsome youth with good manners came to the group of Sufiyaa. Hadhrat Ibraheem said to his companions: “I think that this youth is a Yahudi (Jew).” The others did not like this comment. Hadhrat Ibraheem went out.

The youth who was very observant, asked the Sufiyaa: “What did your chief say?” At first, they hesitated. However on the insistence of the youth they told him the truth. The youth went immediately to Hadhrat Ibraheem and embraced Islam.

When someone questioned him about his conversion, he said: “ It is stated in our Scripture that the understanding of a Siddique is not false. I had thought to put the Muslims to test. When I reflected I concluded that if there is a Siddique among them, he will be in the group of the Sufis who devote themselves to the worship of Allah Ta`ala. When this Sheikh’s gaze fell on me, he immediately recognized that I was not a Muslim. This convinced me that he is a Siddique.”

The young man joined in the company of the Sufiyaa and became a senior Sufi.

137. A YAHUDI EMBRACES ISLAM

Hadhrat Abul Abbas Bin Masruq (rahmatullah alayh) narrates:

“An old man of cheerful disposition used to visit us. He would talk to us and ask many questions. He also told us to unhesitatingly inform him of any opinions we held of him.

One day it came to my mind that the old man was a Jew (pretending to be a Muslim). When I mentioned this to my companion Jareeri, he exclaimed in surprise: ‘Allahu Akbar!’ However, I resolved to voice my opinion to the old man.

When he came, I said: ‘You had told us to inform you of any thoughts we had of you. I am of the opinion that you are a Yahudi.’ The old man lowered his head and after reflecting, said:

‘Undoubtedly, you have spoken the truth. But now I am saying:

I have examined all religions and I had concluded that if there was any truth in any people, it would be among Muslims. I therefore came to test you. I am now convinced of your truth.””

138. A CHRISTIAN EMBRACES ISLAM

The Christian slave of a bigoted Christian came to Hadhrat Abul Qaasim Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh). Pretending to be a Muslim, the slave said:

“O Sheikh! What is the meaning of Rasulullah’s saying:

‘Beware of the insight of the Mu`min, for verily, he looks with the noor of Allah.””

Hadhrat Junaid lowered his head for a few moments. Then, raising his head, he said;

“The time for you to become a Muslim has arrived. Accept Islam.”

The slave immediately embraced Islam. He broke the crucifix which he had with him and threw it away.

139. THE BEGINNING OF HADHRAT JUNAID’S NASEEHAT

Hadhrat Sirri Saqati (rahmatullah alayh) frequently urged Hadhrat Abul Qaasim Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh) to lecture to people. However, Hadhrat Junaid was very modest and humble. He did not consider himself qualified to advise and admonish people. One Friday night he saw in a dream Rasulullah (alayhi wasallam) instructing him to give naseehat to people.

He immediately woke up and even before Fajr he knocked at the door of Hadhrat Sirri. From inside, Hadhrat Sirri said: “As long as you were not directly instructed, you had no confidence in what I said to you.” Henceforth, Hadhrat Junaid would sit in the Musjid to deliver discourses to the people.

140. THE DUA OF THE AHLULLAH FOR A CHRISTIAN

One day Hadhrat Shibli (rahmatullah alayh) left the city with 40 of his mureeds. Addressing them on the outskirts of the city, Sheikh Shibli said:

“Allah Ta`ala has undertaken the responsibility of providing rizq to His servants. Therefore, all of you, have trust in Allah. Do not focus your attention on anyone.”

Sheikh Shibli left them and disappeared for 3 days. Nothing of the spiritual mysteries was revealed to them during this interval. After 3 days when Sheikh Shibli returned, he said: “Allah Ta`ala has given His servants permission to search for their rizq. Therefore, send a truthful one from among you on this errand.” They chose one and sent him off to the city.

In the city, he did not succeed in obtaining any means for the acquisition of food. Finally, overcome by extreme hunger and weakness, he sat down outside the surgery of a Nasara physician who was being visited by numerous patients. When the doctor observed the faqeer, he asked: "What sickness ails you?"

The faqeer did not think it honourable to speak about food to the doctor. He simply stretched his hand like a patient who wants his pulse checked. After checking the pulse, the doctor said: "I have diagnosed your sickness and I know the medicine for it. Sit comfortably."

The physician sent his servant to buy some food. When the food was brought, the doctor presenting it to the faqeer, said: "In my opinion the medicine for your sickness is only this." The faqeer said: "If you are true in your profession, then know that there are 40 persons with this same illness." The doctor ordered his servant to hasten to the market-place to buy food for 40 persons. When the food arrived, the doctor presented it to the faqeer and sent a porter with him to carry the food. The doctor followed at a discreet distance to verify the claim of the faqeer.

When they reached the place where the group of Sufis was, the doctor remained concealed. He looked through the opening. He saw that when the food was placed in front of the mureeds, they called Sheikh Shibli. The Sheikh, without touching the food, said: "There is a wonderful mystery in this food." He instructed the faqeer to narrate the episode of the food. After the faqeer had narrated the whole story, Hadhrat Shibli said: "Are you pleased to eat the food of a Nasara who has been kind to you while you have not yet compensated him?"

The Mureeds said: "O Sayyid! We are poor and mendicants. How can we compensate him?" Hadhrat Shibli said: "Before eating, make dua of Hidaayat for him."

Meanwhile, the doctor was observing the whole scene. When he saw that in spite of their extreme hunger, they had not eaten, he knocked at the door. When the door was opened, he went to them, broke his crucifix and recited the Kalimah. He entered into the circle of Hadhrat Shibli's Mureeds.

141. THE PHYSICIAN WAS THE PATIENT

Once Hadhrat Shibli became very ill. The king sent a very experienced physician to treat Hadhrat Shibli (rahmatullah alayh). However, the doctor was a Christian. Inspite of all his efforts, the condition of Hadhrat Shibli did not improve. In desperation, the doctor said: "If the cure of your illness requires that I cut off any part of my body, I will assuredly do so without hesitation."

Hadhrat Shibli said: "My cure is simple, throw away the cross you are wearing and accept Islam." The physician immediately embraced Islam and recited the Kalimah. Hadhrat Shibli (rahmatullah alayh) recovered from his sickness.

When the king heard this amazing story, he cried much a

142. IMAAN - THE REWARD OF IKHLAAS

"We thought that we had sent a physician to a patient. But in reality we had sent a patient to a physician."

142. IMAAN - THE REWARD OF IKHLAAS

Sheikh Ibraheem Khawwaas (rahmatullahi alayh) would never inform anyone whenever he went on a journey. He would only take a water-jug and set off without telling anyone. He would not take with any other provisions.

Hadhrat Haamid (rahmatullah alayh) says:

“One day I was with Ibraheem Khawwaas in the Musjid. He suddenly picked up his water-jug and left. I followed him. When we reached Qaadsiyah, he asked where I was going. I replied that I was accompanying him. He said:

‘Insha` Allah, I intend to go to Makkah Muazzamah.’ I said: ‘Insha` Allah, it is also my intention to go to Makkah Muazzamah.’

After walking continuously for three days, a young man joined us. He remained walking with us for a day and a night. However, he did not perform any Salaat. When I mentioned this to Sheikh Khawwaas (rahmatullah alayh), he addressed the youth: ‘O lad! Why do you not perform Salaat? In fact, Salaat is more important than Hajj.’ The youth said: ‘O Sheikh! Salaat is not obligatory on me.’

Sheikh Khawwaas: ‘Are you not a Muslim?’

Youth: ‘No, I’m not a Muslim.’

Sheikh: ‘What are you then?’

Youth: ‘I am a Christian. However, inspite of being a Christian, I have based my life on tawakkul. I have resolved to practise tawakkul until perfection. Since I was not convinced of my own sincerity in this resolve, I have renounced the world and wander in the wilderness because there is non besides God Almighty here. I am able to examine my own sincerity in this wilderness.’

After hearing the story of the youth, we continued our journey. Hadhrat Khawwaas said to me: ‘Leave him now. Henceforth he will always be with you.’

When we reached the outskirts of the Haram, Sheikh Khawwaas said to the youth: ‘What is your name?’ He replied: ‘Abdul Maseeh.’

Sheikh: ‘O Abdul Maseeh! This is the threshold of the Haram. It is not permissible for the likes of you to enter the Haram. Allah Ta’ala has declared:

‘Verily the Mushrikeen are impure. Therefore, they should not come near to Musjidul Haram.’

‘Now do not enter Makkah. If we see you there, we shall have you expelled the same time.’

We left him and proceeded. After Makkah, we went to Arafaat. In Arafaat, to our surprise, we saw the youth in ihram. He came to us and fell at the feet of Hadhrat Ibraheem Khawwaas who asked: ‘O Abdul Maseeh! What is your story?’

Youth: ‘Never say “Abdul Maseeh”. I am now the slave of The Being Whose slave Maseeh is.’

Sheikh: ‘Explain your story.’

Youth: ‘After you had left, a caravan of Hujjaaj arrived. As I stood looking at them, it appeared to me that I too was in the state of ihraam. I saw a vision of the Ka`bah. I realised that besides Islam all other religions were baseless. I immediately embraced Islam, took ghusl and donned ihraam. Today I was in search of you.’

Looking at me, Hadhrat Khawwaas said: ‘O Haamid! Look at the barkat of sincerity in even the Christian. Look, how he acquired the Hidaayat of Islam.’

The youth remained with us. Finally he died among the Fuqaraa.”

143. IN SEARCH OF AULIYAA

Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Khafeef (rahmatullah alayh) narrates:

“I have now been travelling for many years in the hope of meeting some of the Abdaal. Finally, after tiring of traveling, I arrived in the city of Istakhar in Iran. I went to a khaanqah of the Sufis. I saw a group of nine Mashaa-ikh. The food had just been placed in front of them. Among them was Hasan Bin Abi Sa’d Abul Azhar Bin Hayyaan. I washed my hands and sat in the place they had opened for me. I joined them in their meals. After eating, we slept for a while. I must have slept only a few minutes when I saw Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in a dream. Nabi-e-Kareem (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said to me: ‘O Ibn Khafeef! The people whom you were searching and whose company you had yearned for are these very people whom you have met in this city and now you too are one of them.’

I desired to inform the group of Abdaals of my dream, but awe for them restrained me. After sunrise, Sheikh Abul Hasan Bin Abi Sa’d suddenly arrived. He said to me: ‘O Abu Abdullah! Narrate to them whatever you had seen in the dream.’

I thereupon informed them. On hearing this, they all departed and dispersed.”

[The number of Abdaal as well as some other categories of Auliya always remains constant. When one among them dies, his post is filled by a new appointment. It appears from this episode that the group of nine Auliya was awaiting a new appointment, hence as soon as they were informed of the appointment, they separated and went in different directions to execute the variety of tasks and missions which Allah Ta`ala imposed on them].

144. RUIN IN THE WAKE OF GREED

One Sheikh narrated the following episode:

“I went on a journey hoping to meet some Abdaal. One day, at about the time of Asr, I reached the outskirts of Basrah. I walked along the river banks. I saw ten men sitting on their musallas. None of them had a water-jug as was the usual practice of the Sufiyaa when they travelled. When they saw me, they all stood up to welcome me. After embracing me, they sat down and became engrossed in meditation. They remained fully absorbed in contemplation until sunset. No one appeared to be even aware of the existence of the others.

After sometime one of them stood up and dived into the water. I did not know what he was doing underwater. However, soon he emerged with eleven fried fish. From among the group one of them stood up and served each one with a fish. He picked the biggest fish for himself and went to one side to eat it. After meals, everyone again became absorbed in meditation. When it was Fajr, the Athaan from the Musaajid nearby could be heard. The group performed Fajr Salaat in Jamaat. After Fajr Salaat, each one folded his musalla and entered into the river. They walked on the surface of the water.

The one who had taken the big fish attempted to follow them, but simply sank down and was drowned.

They looked at him in dismay as he was sinking and said: ‘O man! Whoever among us abuses trust, does not remain in our ranks.’ They proceeded on their journey, walking across the river on the surface of the water while I stood there with a heavy heart gazing at them until they were out of sight.”

[The nafs is an integral constituent of the human being. This episode illustrates that even Auliya of high ranks can fall prey to the snares of shaitaan and the nafs. No one besides the Ambiya - alayhimus salaam-has the assurance of crossing the threshold into the Hereafter with his Taqwa/Imaan intact.

In this episode, the bigger fish was intended for the guest; the Sheikh who had arrived. However, desire/greed ruined the one Wali in the group of ten. The higher a man’s rank, the severer is the punishment for his errors.]

145. NOURISHMENT FROM THE HEAVEN FOR THE AULIYAA ON THE SILVER THREAD

Sheikh Abdullah Bin Ubaidullah Abadani (rahmatullah alayh) narrates:

“After Esha Salaat one day, I was still in the Musjid of Abadan. I observed three men sitting in the first saff. They had performed Salaat with us. They left the Musjid and went in the direction of the river. A strong feeling that they were the Auliya of Allah Ta’ala settled in my heart. I therefore followed them.

When they reached the river, I observed a wonderful spectacle. A thin glittering silver thread spanned across the river. They walked on it and crossed the river. When I attempted to follow, it disappeared as soon as I set foot on it. With a heavy heart I returned shedding tears.

The next morning I observed the same three Auliya in the first saff. They left again as they had done the previous day after staying the whole day in the Musjid. The same episode was re-enacted. The same thing happened on the third day. I realised that I was spiritually defective hence I was unable to accompany them across the river on the silver thread.

On the third night when I set foot on the silver thread, they grabbed my hand and I crossed over with them walking on the thread. When we reached the other side, four men were waiting. They were now a group of seven. I was the eighth one.

I saw descending from the heaven a cloth on which were eight fried fish. We all sat down to eat. Without thinking, I commented: ‘It would have been good if we had salt.’ They lamented and let out a sigh of grief. One of them commented: ‘You among such people!’ (i.e. People unfit to be in the ranks of the Abdaal). They disappeared and I never saw them again.”

146. THE SLAVE WHO WAS THE NOOR OF SOLACE

Abdul Waahid Bin Zaid (rahmatullah alayh) had purchased a slave. During the night he called the slave, but found him missing. The doors and windows were all closed and locked as he had left them. In the morning the slave mysteriously appeared and handed his master a silver coin (dirham) on which was inscribed Surah Ikhlaas. When Hadhrat Abdul Waahid asked him about the dirham, the slave said: "I shall give you such a dirham everyday on condition that you do not call me during the night."

The master accepted. Every morning thereafter, the slave presented a dirham to Hadhrat Abdul Waahid.

Many days thereafter, his neighbour came and said: "Sell your slave. He is a kafan-thief." The neighbour said that the slave was seen entering graves, hence it was assumed that he stole the kafans of the dead. Hadhrat Abdul Waahid was extremely grieved. He decided to follow the slave that night and discover the truth. Continuing the story, he says:

"After Esha Salaat when the slave decided to leave, I saw to my utter amazement the closed door open up at a sign made by him. When he made another sign, the door closed. He passed through three doors of the house in this manner. I was observing him closely from a vantage point in concealment. When he reached outside, I followed. We walked on until we arrived in a plain. He removed his clothes and donned a simple garment of rough sack cloth. Soon he was engrossed in Salaat until Fajr. After completing his Salaat, he raised his face towards the heaven, and made dua: 'O my Great Master! Give me the wage for my small master.'

As he supplicated, a dirham fell from above and landed by him. He put the dirham in his pocket. I was astonished and bewildered and was overcome with awe and fear. I made wudhu and performed two rak'ats. I sought forgiveness from Allah Ta`ala for the suspicion I had entertained about him and I resolved to set him free.

When I looked, I saw that he had disappeared. I was now extremely concerned. I did not know where I was. I could not recognize the wilderness where I was standing. Suddenly I saw a man on a green horse approaching. He said: 'O Abdul Waahid! Why are you sitting here today?' I explained what had transpired. He asked: 'Do you know the distance this place is from your city?' I said: 'I know nothing.' He said: 'For a man on a fast horse, it will take two years to reach your city. But remain here. Tonight your slave will return to this place.' The horseman disappeared.

That night my slave appeared suddenly. A cloth with a variety of dishes appeared. The slave said: 'O master, eat! In future do not do so.' I ate. The slave remained performing Salaat until the morning. Then taking hold of my hand, he recited a glorious Name of Allah (Ism - e - A`zam) which I could not make out. He walked with me a few steps. To my amazement I was standing at the entrance of my home. He then said: ' O my master! Did you not resolve to set me free?'

I said: 'That is still my intention.'

The Slave: ' In lieu of the price you had paid for me, emancipate me. You will also be rewarded in the Aakhirah.'

He picked up a stone and gave it to me. When I took it, it was gold. The slave departed

leaving me with a broken heart.

My neighbour came to me and asked: ‘What have you decided about your kafan-thief slave?’

I said: ‘Beware! He is not a kafan-thief. He is a celestial light of solace.’

I narrated the miracles of the slave to the neighbours. They all cried abundantly and repented.”

147. THE SLAVE WITH THREE ‘DEFECTS’

Hadhrat Ibraheem Khawwaas (rahmatullah alayh) narrates: “Once in the city of Basrah I saw a slave on sale. His master explained that the slave had the following three ‘defects’ in him: (1) He does not sleep at night. (2) He does not eat during the day.(3) He speaks only when absolutely necessary.

I said to the slave: ‘To me you appear to be an Aarif.’ The slave responded: ‘O Ibraheem! If I was an Aarif, I would never turn my attention to anyone besides Allah.’

This statement of the slave convinced me that he was an Aarif. I paid the price and purchased him, the seller remarked: ‘What are you going to do with a mad slave?’ I said in my heart: ‘O Allah! I have set this slave free for only Your Sake.’

The slave said: ‘O Ibraheem! You emancipated me from slavery here on earth. Allah has emancipated you from Jahannum in the Aakhirah.’

He suddenly disappeared from my sight. I never again saw or heard of him.”

148. THE TEACHING OF A SLAVE

A Buzrug narrates: “After I purchased a slave I asked his name. He replied: “My name is whatever you call me.” I said: “What work will you do?” He said: “Whatever task you impose on me.”

I said: “What food do you prefer?”

He said: “Whatever you feed me.”

I said: “What does your heart wish for?”

He said: “What can a slave wish for in the presence of his master?” (i.e. His master is everything for him.)

I broke down crying. I reflected and thought of the relationship I should have with my Master, Allah Ta’ala. I said to the slave: ‘O my friend! You have imparted adab (respect) to me.’”

149. A LESSON IN SELF-SACRIFICE GIVEN BY A DOG

Once a dog found a dead animal on the outskirts of the town. He returned to the town and

brought 20 dogs with him. All the dogs devoured the dead animal while the leader sat one side looking on. When they all had eaten and left, there remained only some bones. The leader came and ate whatever had remained.

150. HADHRAT UWAIS QARNI'S DISCOURSE

Hadhrat Ammaar Bin Yusuf Jinni (rahmatullah alayh) says that someone asked Hadhrat Uwais Qarni (rahmatullah alayh) :

“How do you spend the time every morning and evening?”

Hadhrat Uwais said: “In the morning I live in the love of Allah. In the evening I am engrossed in praising Him. What do you ask about a man who in the morning has no hope of living until the evening. The spectacle of Maut leaves no happiness for a Muslim. The right of Allah leaves no scope for accumulating gold and silver. Amr Bil Ma`roof Nahy anil Munkar (Commanding righteousness and forbidding evil) does not allow anyone to become the friend of a Muslim. We are among those who practice Amr Bil Ma`roof. People criticize us for this and they endeavour to ruin our reputation. They seek the aid of fussaq against us. By Allah! They have slandered me with grave crimes.”

EPISODES FROM THE LIVES OF THE AULIYAA PART 4

151. IBN HIBBAAN MEETS UWAIS QARNI

Haram Ibn Hibbaan (rahmatullah alayh) had developed a great yearning for meeting Hadhrat Uwais Qarni (rahmatullah alayh). With only this purpose in mind, he journeyed to Kufaa. Continuing the story, he narrates:

“During the afternoon I reached the banks of the River Euphrates. There I saw him sitting and making wudhu. From the description of him which I had heard, I recognized him. I said: “Assala mu Alaikum!” He responded and looked towards me. I extended my hand, but he did not take it. I said:

‘O Uwais, may Allah have mercy on you and may He forgive you. How are you?’

I only said this much and broke down crying because I had a profound love for him. He too cried and said:

‘O Haram Ibn Hibbaan! May Allah keep you happy. How are you? From where did you gain information of my whereabouts?’

I said: ‘Allah Ta`ala showed me.’

He said:

‘There is no Deity but Allah. Glory unto Him - our Rabb! Verily the promise of our Rabb will most assuredly be fulfilled.’

I said: ‘How do you know my name and the name of my father? Prior to this day I had never seen you nor had you seen me.’

Hadhrat Uwais recited the Qur'aanic verse:

‘The One Who knows, Who is Aware has informed me.’

I said: ‘Narrate to me a Hadith of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).’

Uwais: ‘I did not have the fortune of meeting Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). I saw those who had seen Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).’

I said: ‘O my Beloved Brother! Recite to me some verses of the Qur'aan. My heart yearns to listen to you.’

Uwais:

He let out such a loud shriek that I thought he would collapse. He then said: ‘O Ibn Hibbaan! Your father has already died. Soon you too will die. It is not known if you will enter Jannat or Jahannum. Our Father Adam and our Mother Hawwa (alayhimus salaam) have died. Hadhrat Nooh, Ibraheem, Musa and Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), and Abu Bakr Siddique (radhiallahu anhu) and my brother Umar Bin Khattaab (radhiallahu anhu) have all died.’

I interjected: ‘Umar (radhiallahu anhu) has not yet died.’

Uwais: ‘He has already died,’

[Later Ibn Hibbaan discovered that Hadhrat Umar - radhiallahu anhu - had died.]

‘We too will die.’

Then Hadhrat Uwais recited Durood Shareef and made dua. He finally added: ‘My wasiyyat to you is that you remember Maut. Never be forgetful of it for one moment. When you return to your people, urge them to fear Allah Ta`ala. Admonish the Ummah. Now make dua for me and for yourself. You will never again see me. I abhor fame and I love solitude. Do not ask anyone about me nor search for me. Remember me in your dua. I too shall remember you. Now go away from me. I too am leaving.’

I expressed my desire to walk with him a short distance, but he refused. With a heavy heart stricken with sadness and shedding tears I departed from him. I saw him crying. I continued glancing back until I saw him disappearing into Basrah.

Thereafter, I again searched for him and made many inquiries, but all in vain. Not a week passes without me seeing Hadhrat Uwais (rahmatullah alayh) in a dream.”

152. A FALCON FLIES AWAY - THE VALUE OF A FAQEER'S DESIRE

Hadhrat Sheikh Abi Muhammad Hareeri (rahmatullah alayh) narrates: “A falcon came to me, but I did not catch it. Thereafter, I spent 40 years trying to catch a falcon, but in vain.”

Someone asked him about the falcon. He explained: “Once a man came to us at the musaafir khana (inn) after Asr. He was a young man, pale in colour, with disheveled hair and bare-feet. He made wudhu and performed Salaat. Thereafter, he sat in contemplation until Maghrib with his head tucked into his shawl.

After Maghrib Salaat he again sat in the same manner in meditation. Meanwhile, the Khalifah's messenger came to invite us for meals. I went up to the young man and invited him to accompany us to the Khalifah for meals. The young man said: ‘My heart has no desire to go to the palace of the Khalifah, but I am desirous of eating hot halwa.’

Since he had rejected our request and made known his desire, I too ignored him. I thought that he was a new Muslim who had not yet learned manners. We then went to the Khalifah's mansion and returned late at night. When I entered the musaafir khana I saw the young man sitting in the same position. I too sat for a short while on the musalla. I then fell asleep. In a dream I saw numerous people having assembled. Someone pointed out: ‘This is Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and the vast assembly is the Ambiyaa (alayhimus salaam).’ I went to the presence of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and made Salaam. He turned his face away and did not respond. I went to the other side, but he again ignored me. I became extremely fearful and implored: ‘O Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), what wrong have I done to warrant your displeasure?’

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam): ‘A faqeer had expressed his desire to you, but you did not fulfill it.’

My eyes opened. I hurried to the faqeer, but he was not there. I heard the door creaking and I rushed in pursuit. Outside I called to him: ‘O young man! Wait a bit. I shall bring whatever you had desired.’ He looked at me and said: ‘When the faqeer asked you for something, you refused. Now after 124 thousand Ambiyaa had interceded, you came running. I no longer have any desire. So saying, he departed.’

The regret and grief for Hadhrat Hareeri were overwhelming. He never again had the opportunity of ‘catching’ a falcon.

153. THE EFFECTS OF NASEEHAT ON A YOUNG MAN.

One day while Hadhrat Sirri Saqati (rahmatullah alayh) was giving a bayaan (discourse) in the Musjid, a handsome young man dressed in expensive garments entered with a few friends. During the bayaan, Hadhrat Sirri said: “What is very surprising is that the weak disobeys the powerful one.” The colour of the young man changed when he heard this statement.

The next day he returned to the Musjid. After performing two rak'ats Salaat, he sat in the (majlis) gathering of Hadhrat Sirri and said: “O Sirri! Yesterday I heard you saying that the weak disobey the powerful one. Please explain this.” Hadhrat Sirri said: “No one is more powerful than Allah, The Gracious, and man is the weakest. Yet he disobeys Allah Ta’ala.”

He then left.

The following day he returned wearing only two simple garments. No one accompanied him. He asked Hadhrat Sirri: "In which way does a person reach Allah?"

Hadhrat Sirri: "If you desire Ibaadat then fast by day and spend the nights in Salaat. If you desire only Allah Ta`ala, then abandon everything beside him and live in the Musaajid, desolate places and graveyards."

The young man stood up saying: "By Allah! I shall choose the difficult path."

After some days, a few young men came to me and asked about the whereabouts of Ahmad Bin Yazeed Khatib. Hadhrat Sirri told them that he never heard the name nor was he aware of the person. However, he explained the incident of the young man. Perhaps they were looking for him. They apprized Hadhrat Sirri of the young man's address and requested him to inform them should he turn up.

A year passed by without any news of the young man. One night after Esha someone knocked on the door of Hadhrat Sirri. He opened the door, to his surprise he saw the young man. He kissed Hadhrat Sirri's forehead and said: "O Sirri! May Allah free me from the fire of Jahannum just as He has freed me from the slavery of this world."

Hadhrat Sirri made a sign to his companion to inform the young man's family of his arrival. Soon his wife, accompanied by his children hastily came. One child was adorned with jewels and fine garments. She pushed the small child into the young man's lap and said: "You have made me a widow and your children orphans while you are alive."

Looking at Hadhrat Sirri, the young man said: "O Sirri! How could you have betrayed me like this?" Turning to his wife and children he said: "By Allah ! You are the fruits of my heart. You are my beloved ones. I love you all more than the entire creation . But what can I do? Sirri said that I have to sever all ties."

The young man removed the jewels etc. from his child and instructed his wife to give it to the poor. He asked her to tear a portion of his shawl and clad the child with it. In consternation, his wife said that she could not bear to see her child in such a state. She snatched the child from him. When he saw her attitude, he stood up and said with grief: "This night you have kept me from the remembrance of my Allah." He broke away, ran out and disappeared, leaving his family sobbing and wailing. His wife implored Hadhrat Sirri to inform her if he ever returns.

Many years flew by without any news of the young man. One day an old woman visited Hadhrat Sirri and informed him that at a place called Shunuziah a young man was asking about him. Hadhrat Sirri hastened to the place. He saw the young man lying with a mud brick (for a pillow) under his head. When Hadhrat Sirri made Salaam, the young man opened his eyes and said: "O Sirri! Will Allah forgive the likes of me?"

Hadhrat Sirri: "Yes."

Young man: "I am immersed in sins."

Hadhrat Sirri: "He forgives even those drowned in sins."

Young man: "I have a few dirhams. When I die, buy whatever is required for my burial with these dirhams. Do not inform my family. They will buy expensive Kafan for me with Haraam money."

Hadhrat Sirri sat at his side for a while. He again opened his eyes and recited the Aayat:

"For the likes of this (reward) should the people who do (good) deeds strive."

His soul then took flight from his earthly body.

Hadhrat Sirri fulfilled the wasiyyat of the young man. After a long time his wife visited Hadhrat Sirri in the hope of hearing something of her husband. He then informed her of his death and of everything that had transpired. She was beyond herself with grief and sorrow. Her crying knew no bounds. She distributed all her wealth in the Path of Allah and spent her days in mourning until finally she died.

154. THE REFORMATION OF A KING

Hadhrat Sheikh Abdul Fawaris Shah Bin Shuja Kirmaani (rahmatullahi alayh) prior to his reformation and renunciation of the world was the king of Kirmaan. One day in pursuit of a prey, he was separated from the hunting party. He found himself alone in a desolate wilderness.

Suddenly he saw a young man seated on the back of a lion while many beasts were around him. When the animals saw the king, they leapt towards him, but the young man restrained them. The wild animals submitted to his command.

When the young man came near to the king, he said: "Assalaam Alaikum! O king! How oblivious are you of Allah Ta'ala. You have forgotten the Aakhirah for the sake of the world. In pursuit of carnal pleasures you have cast aside the service of your King (Allah Ta'ala). Allah Ta'ala gave you the world to assist you to serve Him. But you have made it a medium of attaining pleasure and luxury."

While the young man was admonishing the king, an old woman appeared with a cup in her hand, which she handed to him. The young man drank it and gave the remainder to the king. After the king drank, he commented: "I never drank any drink so cold and so delicious." Meanwhile the old woman disappeared.

The young man said: "The old woman is the world. Allah Ta'ala instructed her to serve me. Are you not aware that when Allah Ta'ala created the earth, He said: "O Earth! Serve whoever serves Me and enslave into your service whoever serves you."

The king was a completely reformed person. He repented, gave up his kingdom and renounced the world. All the spiritual wonders which thereafter emanated from Hadhrat Kirmaani (rahmatullahi alayh) are well known.

155. THE REFORMATION OF MALIK BIN DINAAR

Everyone is aware of Hadhrat Malik Bin Dinaar (rahmatullahi alayh), one of Islam's most

famous Auliya.

Narrating the story of his reformation, he said:

"I was a drunkard. I was perpetually immersed in wine. Once I purchased an extremely beautiful slave girl. A daughter of mine was born to her. I had the profoundest love for this daughter. When my baby started to walk, my love for her increased.

Whenever I would commence drinking, she would come, snatch the wine and spill it on my clothes. When she was two years old, she died. Sorrow and grief drove me close to insanity. I was ruined.

One day on a Friday night after half of the month of Shabaan had passed I was intoxicated with liquor. I went to sleep without even performing Esha Salaat. I dreamt that I was in the plains of Qiyaamah. The dead became alive and were pouring out from their graves and rushing forward. I too joined the vast multitudes of people.

I perceived a hissing sound behind me. When I turned, I saw a huge black serpent with its fangs bared slithering towards me. In terror I ran as fast as I could. I was stricken with inordinate fear. Along the path I fled I encountered an old man in white garments smelling of the fragrance of perfume. I pleaded with him to save me from the serpent. He said: 'I am a weak man. the serpent is stronger than me. I cannot save you, run ahead. Perhaps Allah Ta'ala opens a way for your safety.' I ran further on and climbed a high hill. From the top of the hill I could see Jahannum with its various sections and its flames. I almost fell over the brink into Jahannum because of the serpent behind me. I heard a voice calling: 'Move back. You are not destined for the Fire.' I derived comfort from this proclamation.

I moved back and ran towards the old man with the serpent following in my tracks. When I pleaded with the old man to save me. He began crying and said: 'I myself am frail and weak. Go into that mountain. The treasures of the Muslims are held in trust there. If something belonging to you happens to be there, you will get aid from it.' I looked at the round - shaped mountain. It had many doors. Curtains were hanging on the entrances. The frames of the sides were of gold and precious stones. The curtains were of silk. I ran towards the mountain. With the serpent relentlessly in pursuit. When I came into close proximity of the mountain - entrances, some angels lifted the curtains. They searched in the hope of finding something which would save me. I had lost hope.

Numerous little children with shining faces came out of the entrances. The serpent was almost on me. I was shocked with terror. A child shrieked out: 'You all are present and it is almost on him.' A group of children emerged. Among them I saw my daughter too. When she saw me, she cried and exclaimed: 'Alas! O my father! Wallah!' She ran back into the glittering mansion and suddenly held out her left hand, taking hold of my right hand. With her right hand she pointed to the snake. It turned and slithered away. My daughter made me sit down. She then sat on my lap. Stroking my bearded with her hand, she recited the Aayat:

"What, has the time not arrived for the believers that their hearts become tender for the thikr of Allah and for the truth which has been revealed?"

I cried and asked: 'O my daughter! Do you learn to recite the Qur'aan Shareef here?' She said: 'We learn from you.'

Maalik: ‘What was the serpent which was pursuing me?’

Daughter: ‘The consequence of your evil deeds. You strengthened it with your evil deeds. It desired that you burn in the Fire.’

Maalik: ‘Who was the old man?’

Daughter: ‘My father, he was your good deeds. You had weakened your good deeds so much that they lacked the strength to fight off your evil deeds.’

Maalik: ‘What are you doing in this mountain?’

Daughter: ‘We are the children of Muslims. We shall live here until Qiyaamah. We await your (i.e. parents) arrival, so that we could intercede on your behalf.’

When my eyes opened, I was full of fear. In the morning I repented and gave in the path of Allah whatever I had. This is how I had reformed.”

The noble author says:

“According to the Hadith Shareef, the deeds of a man are buried with him. In the grave they call him. If his deeds were virtuous, they honour him and keep him happy. His grave becomes bright and he is saved from the torments. If his deeds were evil, they terrify him and distress him. His grave becomes dark and in its constriction he is punished.”

156. THE POWER OF VIRTUOUS DEEDS

A Saalih of Yemen narrated the following episode:

“A Mayyit was buried. as the people were leaving, they heard a loud explosion in the grave. A huge black dog jumped out and fled. A pious man present said to the dog: ‘May Allah destroy you! What evil are you?’

Dog: ‘I am the evil deeds of that Mayyit.’

Pious man: ‘Did the explosion occur to the Mayyit or to you?’

Dog: ‘It struck me. The constant recitation of Yaseen, etc. arrived and prevented me from approaching the Mayyit.’

[The good deeds of this Mayyit were strong, hence they overcame his evil deeds by the grace of Allah Ta`ala. If his evil deeds were stronger, they would have overwhelmed his good deeds. He would then have been plunged into a variety of punishment].

157. THE SERPENT OF EVIL

When the grave was dug for an evil man who had died, a large black serpent was found coiled up in the grave. A second grave was dug and there too appeared a serpent. A third and a fourth grave were dug. In each grave a serpent was found. After having dug 30 graves, the people realised that there was no escape from Allah’s punishment. Finally the man was buried along with the serpent inside his grave.

This serpent was the form his evil deeds had assumed. May Allah Ta`ala save us all.

158. PUNISHMENT FOR A KAFAN-THIEF

Abu Ishaq Fazari (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates that a man who used to frequent his gatherings would always cover half his face. One day Abu Ishaq questioned him regarding this practice. The man said: "Promise that you will not reveal my secret to anyone." After Abu Ishaq promised, the man explained his story:

"I was a kafan-thief. One day I dug open the grave of a woman who had just been buried. I pulled off the first garment of her kafan. When I tried to pull off the second covering, I was unable to do it. Placing both my knees on the ground, I pulled the garment with force. The dead woman raised her hand and struck me in the face. The imprint of her fingers remained of my face."

Abu Ishaq asked: "Then what did you do?" The former kafan-thief replied: "I properly arranged the kafan sheets, replaced the bricks covering the lahd and filled the grave with sand. I then resolved never again to commit this evil deed."

Abu Ishaq in a letter to Hadhrat Auzaa-ee (rahmatullahi alayh) narrated this episode. Hadhrat Auza-ee wrote back: "Ask him-'O Unfortunate One! Would you do so with the dead who were the people of Tawheed whose faces were in the direction of the Qiblah?'"

When he posed this question to the man, he said: "The faces of most of them were turned away from the Qiblah."

Abu Ishaq conveyed this information to Hadhrat Auza-ee. In reply Hadhrat Auza-ee wrote thrice:

"Know that one whose face is turned away from the Qiblah, died as an enemy of the Deen."

159. THE LAST WORDS

(i). A businessman who was completely oblivious (ghaafil) of Allah Ta`ala was unable to recite the Kalimah at the time of his maut. Only business transactions were on his tongue. He would repeatedly say: "One more bail of fodder."

A Sheikh who was present said to his mureeds: "Recite 'La- ilaha il lal lah' in abundance so that you will readily recite this Kalimah when maut arrives just as this man recited his business statements which were his life long occupation."

(ii). A man whose practice it was to recite the Qur'aan Shareef in abundance, died while continuously reciting the Qur'aanic Aayat:

A man will die in the state which he had spent his life he will also be resurrected in Qiyaamah in the state which he had died. We should make dua that Allah Ta`ala should grant us the taufeeq to die on the Belief of the Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama`ah and in peace. Aameen.

160. THE BARKAT OF ACTS OF THAWAAB

Bahiyah was a very pious lady. While she was dying she looked towards the heaven and supplicated: "O my Allah! Only You are my Treasure in my life and death. My trust is only in

You. Do not disgrace me. Save me from the torments of the grave.”

After she died, her son adopted the practice of visiting her grave every Thursday and Friday. He would recite the Qur'aan Shareef and bestow the thawaab of it to his mother as well as to the other inmates of the grave. He would also make Dua-e-Maghfirah for them.

The son narrates:

“One night I saw my mother in a dream. I made Salaam and asked her: ‘Mother how are you faring?’

She replied: ‘O my son! The hardships and torments of Maut are many. But, until Qiyaamah I am in comfort here in Barzakh with the kindness and grace of Allah Ta’ala. I have been awarded a variety of comforts and luxuries.’

I asked: ‘Do you need anything?’

She replied: ‘Yes! Never abandon your practice of visiting me and reciting the Qur'aan Shareef, dua, etc. When you come, great happiness prevails. When you arrive, the inmates of the graves come to me in delight and inform me of your approach.’

I continued my practice of visiting the qabrastaan, reciting Qur'aan Shareef and making dua for my mother and the rest of the inmates of the graves.

One night I dreamt that a large crowd of people came to me. I asked them: ‘Who are you?’ They replied: ‘We are the inmates of the grave. We have come to express our gratitude to you. Do not abandon your practice.’”

161. THE AHL-E-QUBOOR SEARCHING FOR BARKAT OF THAWAAB

In a trance a pious man saw the Ahl-e-Quboor (inmates of the graves) of a qabrastaan coming out of their graves. They went around the qabrastaan gathering something like people picking fruit from the trees. He could not make out what they were gathering. He continues the story:

“I was very surprised. I saw one man sitting peacefully, doing nothing. I went to him and asked: ‘What are they gathering?’ He replied: ‘They are gathering the barkat of the thawaab of virtuous deeds which Muslims render for their sake.’

I said: ‘You too are amongst them. Why are you not gathering anything?’

He said: ‘I am not in need of it. My son regularly recites the Qur'aan Shareef and bestows the thawaab to me.’

I asked: ‘Where is your son?’

He said: ‘He is a young man who trades in the bazaar.’(The deceased informed him of the precise location)

When my eyes opened I hastened to the market-place. I arrived at the place indicated to me in the dream. I saw a young man whose lips were continuously moving even while he was

engaging in his work. I asked him: ‘Why do you move your lips?’

He said: ‘I recite the Qur`aan Shareef for the sake of my deceased father.’

After some time I again saw the qabrustaan in a dream and the inmates of the grave were gathering barkat in the same way. To my surprise I saw that the man who had earlier been sitting aloof, was now also among the crowd gathering the barakat. My eyes opened. I hastened to the shop of the man’s son. On reaching there, I was informed that he had already died.”

[The deeds of virtue which Muslims render for the sake of deceased Muslims in general, are shared by the Ahl-e-Quboor in general. This episode illustrates that acts of Isaal-e-Thawaab rendered for a particular Mayyit make him independent of the thawaab bestowed in general to the deceased of the Ummat. If the virtuous deed is an act of Thawaab -e-Jaariyah (perpetual thawaab), the Mayyit’s independence and benefit will be perpetual - And Allah Knows Best.

In this episode, the thawaab of the virtuous act of reciting Qur`aan Shareef terminated with the death of the son. Hence his father too joined the Ahl-e-Quboor to procure spiritual benefits for himself.

Muslims should do acts of Thawaab-e-Jaariyah to ensure that the thawaab continues to accrue even after their death. Such acts are ta’leem (teaching the Deen), opening Madrasahs, publication of Islamic literature, establishing water facilities, Musjids, etc].

162. THE QUR`AAN IS NOOR IN THE QABR

After a pious lady had died, her friend saw her in a dream. She saw the deceased lady seated on a throne. Below the throne was a utensil of Noor (celestial light) which was covered. She asked her deceased friend about the covered utensil. The deceased replied:

“In it is the gift of my husband, which he sent for me last night.”

The next day the woman related her dream to the deceased’s husband. He said: “I had recited the Qur`aan Shareef and bestowed the thawaab of it to her.”

163. THE REALITY OF THAWAAB OF QUR`AAN TILAAWAT

Some Ulama have denied the reality of the thawaab of Qur`aan Tilaawat reaching the amwat (the dead). While they accept that the thawaab of Sadaqah reaches the amwat, this does not apply to tilaawat. Among the exponents of this belief was Imam Mufti Anam Izzuddeen Ibn Abdus Salaam (rahmatullahi alayh). After his death a Buzrug who saw the Imam in a dream asked him about his belief. The Imam replied: “Alas! I discovered the reality to be in conflict with my belief.”

164. DO NOT FORGET YOUR DEAD

Once Hadhrat Saalik Mirri (rahmatullahi alayh) was passing through a qabrustan on a Friday night. He sat down by a grave and fell asleep. He dreamt that the Ahl-e-Quboor were emerging from their graves. Soon they gathered and sat in a circle talking amongst themselves. A youth in dirty clothes and with a sad countenance was sitting aloof.

Suddenly a group of Angels descended carrying trays of Noor. They distributed these to all those who were seated in the circle. Each one returned to his/her grave with his/her tray. Only the youth received nothing. He was shattered with grief. As he was about to enter his grave, Hadhrat Saalih exclaimed: "O servant of Allah! Why are you sad? What is happening here?"

The youth said: "The trays contain the gifts of Sadaqah , Dua, Tilaawat, etc. which the living have sent for their dead relatives and friends. Every Jumuah these gifts reach the dead. But, I have a mother who has remarried. She is engrossed in the world and has completely forgotten me, hence there is no gift for me."

Hadhrat Saalih enquired about the whereabouts of his mother. The youth informed him in the dream of his mother's exact address. In the morning Hadhrat Saalih hastened to the address. From behind a screen he explained the plight of the youth to his mother. She broke down crying confessing her error. She resolved never to forget her son again. She gave Hadhrat Saalih 1000 dirhams requesting him to distribute it as Sadaqah so that the thawaab is transmitted to her son.

The next Friday Hadhrat Saalih again passed through the same qabrustan. He set next to a grave and fell asleep. In a dream the same scene was re-enacted. However this time he saw the youth dressed in beautiful garments. He too had received his mother's gifts. He approached Hadhrat Saalih and said: "O Saalih! May Allah Ta`ala reward you wonderfully. The gifts have reached me."

Hadhrat Saalih: "Do you (the Ahl-e-Quboor) recognise Jumuah?"

The youth: "Yes. Even the birds know Jumuah. When Jumuah arrives they sing: 'As salaam, As salaam O Day of Jumuah!'

O Saalih! May Allah Ta`ala repeatedly bestow the Barkat of Jumuah to us."

165. TILAAWAT IN THE QABR

A reformed Kafan-thief narrated the following interesting episode which was the cause of his repentance and reformation:

"Once when I dug open a grave I was astonished to see a man sitting on a throne reciting the Qur'aan Shareef. A stream of water was flowing from under the throne. The sight of this wonderful scene struck awe in me. I fell down unconscious.

Some people who were passing by pulled me out of the grave. However, no one was aware of the cause of my unconsciousness. I regained conscious on the third day. I then narrated my experience to the people. A man insisted that the grave be shown to him. Although I had withheld this information, I decided to let him know. However, that night before I had divulged the information, the inmate of that grave appeared to me in a dream and warned me that I would become afflicted with a variety of calamities if I informed anyone. I therefore abandoned the idea. No one ever discovered which grave it was."

166. A WALI IS KILLED BY THE SWORD OF DIVINE LOVE

Hadhrat Mansur Ibn Ammar (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates:

“One Day I observed a young man performing Salaat like a person truly overcome with Allah’s fear. I could see that he was a Wali of Allah. I waited until he completed his Salaat. After greeting, I said:

‘Do you know that Jahannum is a valley known as Bita. It scorches off the skin of the man who has turned his back (on Allah)’

When the young man heard this, he shrieked and fell unconscious. When he regained conscious he asked me to recite something. I recited the following Qur'aanic verses:

“O People of Imaan! Save yourselves and your families from the Fire whose fuel is people and stones. Stern and powerful Angels are appointed over it. They do not disobey Allah in whatever He has commanded them. They do as they are commanded.”

Hearing this, the young man collapsed and died. When I opened his Kurtah, I saw miraculously inscribed on his breast the following Aayat:

“He dwells in a life of pleasure in a lofty paradise. Its fruits are near.”

On the third night I saw in a dream the youth seated on a wonderful throne with a dazzling crown on his head. I said: ‘ How did Allah treat you?’

He said: ‘Allah forgave me. He bestowed to me the rewards of the People of Badr and even more.’

I said: ‘Why more than the People of Badr?’

He said: ‘The People of Badr were killed by the swords of the kuffaar while I was killed by the Kalaam of Allah.’

167. A SHEIKH’S EXPERIENCE

Once Sheikh Arif Billah Ibn Muhammad Yemeni Hadhrami (rahmatullahi alayh) passed through a qabrustan in Yemen. He stood by a grave. Suddenly he was overcome by extreme grief. After a while, his grief disappeared and he laughed. Observers were surprised by his conflicting states. He explained:

“It was revealed to me that the people of these graves were being punished. Observing this, grief settled over me and I cried. I supplicated to Allah Ta`ala to forgive them. I was informed that my intercession has been accepted. The inmate of this particular grave asked: ‘O Sheikh! Am I also included in your intercession? I am a certain singer (She mentioned her name).’ This made me laugh. I said: ‘Yes, you too are included.’

Thereafter the Sheikh asked the one who had dug the grave of the person who was recently buried there: ‘Who is this inmate?’ He mentioned the same singer for whom the Sheikh had made dua.

168. THE MUHIBBAAN (LOVERS OF ALLAH) ARE ALIVE

(i). Sheikh Abu Saeed Khazaar (rahmatullahi alayh) one day while in Makkah Muazzamah, came out from Baab-Bani Shaibah. He saw the body of a handsome young man laying nearby. While he was intensely looking at the face, the Mayyit smiled and said:

“O Abu Saeed! Do you not know that the Muhibbaan of Allah do not die even though it appears that they are dead? They are merely transferred to a different realm.”

(ii). Sheikh Abu Ya`qub Samusi (rahmatullahi alayh) narrates: “A Mureed came to me in Makkah and said: ‘O Ustaadh! I shall die tomorrow at the time of Zuhr. Take this Dinaar and use it for my Kafan and burial.’

The next day the mureed made Tawaaf and thereafter died as he had predicted. I gave him ghusl and buried him. When I had laid him in the grave. He opened his eyes. I said: ‘The dead is coming to life!’ He said: ‘In fact I am alive. The Muhibbaan of Allah remain alive.’

(iii). A Buzrug was giving ghusl to a mureed who had died. While giving ghusl, the Mayyit caught hold of the Buzrug’s finger. The Buzrug said: “O Son! Leave my finger. I know you are not dead. You have only been transferred from one realm to another realm.”

The Mayyit then released the Buzrug’s finger.

169. THE SEA OPENS UP

A Buzrug reported that once he was on a ship. A man on board died after a sickness of several days. The Buzrug says: “We gave him ghusl and Kafan. When we prepared to lower the Mayyit into the water suddenly the sea split into two. The ship ran aground. We disembarked, dug a grave and buried the Mayyit. After we boarded the ship, the sea miraculously closed up and the ship began sailing.”

170. HOW A SHEIKH DIED

A Buzrug narrates: “In a wilderness I came across the dead body of Sheikh Abu Turaab Bakhshi (rahmatullahi alayh). He died standing. The Mayyit was standing facing the Qiblah. I endeavoured to remove the Mayyit to bury it, but the body would not budge. I heard a Voice saying: “Leave the wali of Allah by Allah.”

171. JANNAT REVEALED

Just prior to his death, Hadhrat Sheikh Abu Ali Roodbaari (rahmatullahi alayh) opened his eyes and said: “The portals of the heaven have been opened and these Gardens (of Jannat) have been adorned. A proclaimer is saying:

“O Abu Ali! We have bestowed to you the loftiest states even though you did not wish for these.”

172. SMILING AFTER DEATH

When Hadhrat Ibn Jala (rahmatullahi alayh) had died, people saw him smiling. The physician said that he was alive. When he examined the body, he pronounced him dead. They opened the face and found the Sheikh laughing. The doctor said: “I do not know if he is alive or dead.”

173. A WALI’S DUA ACCEPTED

Hadhrat Imaam Ahmad Ibn Khadhraviyah at the age of 95 years was on his deathbed. His creditors had entered and were demanding payment of 700 dinaars. The Sheikh supplicated to Allah Ta`ala to free him of the debt. As he made dua, there was a knock at the door. A man entered and said: "Where are the creditors of Ahmad?" He paid the debt and Sheikh Ahmad died.

174. THE EFFECT OF SHIBLI'S TALK

A Saalih man said to Hadhrat Shibli (rahmatullahi alayh): "Why do you say only 'Allah'?" Hadhrat Shibli recited the Ayat:

"Say: 'Allah', then leave them to play in there conjecturing."

The pious man let out a loud shriek and died. The relatives blaming Hadhrat Shibli for his death demanded payment of the diyat (blood-money). They apprehended Hadhrat Shibli and took him to the court of the Khalifah. When Hadhrat Shibli was questioned, he replied:

"A soul cried because of yearning. When it was called it went towards the Voice of its Beloved. What is my fault?"

When the Khalifah heard this comment, he too shrieked aloud and said:

"Leave him! There is no blame on him."

175. HONOUR AND DISGRACE

Hadhrat Khalf Ibn Saalim (rahmatullahi alayh) said to Hadhrat Abu Ali Ibn Mugheerah (rahmatullahi alayh): "Where is your place?"

Ibn Mugheerah: "Where the honourable and the contemptible are equal."

Ibn Saalim: "Where is that?"

Ibn Mugheerah: "The Qabrustan."

Ibn Saalim: "Do you not become fearful of the darkness of the night?"

Ibn Mugheerah: "At that time I think of the darkness and terror of the grave. The fear at darkness of the night then recedes."

Ibn Saalim: "You must have seen some scenes in the Qabrustan."

Ibn Mugheerah: "Perhaps I did, but when I think of the terrors of the Aakhirah, all other fears are dispelled."

176. CONSEQUENCES OF SHORT WEIGHT

A man who used to weigh goods incorrectly (giving less in weight) was dying. A Buzrug who happened to be present made talqueen of the Kalimah, but the man could not recite it. He said: "I cannot recite the Kalimah. The needle of the scale penetrates my tongue (i.e. when he

attempts to recite).”

177. THE LOFTY STATES OF SOME AULIYAA

(i). A companion saw Imaam Ahmad Bin Hambal in a dream. The Imaam was walking proudly. The companion asked: “O Brother! Why this proudful strut?”

Imaam Ahmad said: “This is the style of Allah’s servants in Darus Salaam (The Abode of Peace-Jannat).”

Companion: “What treatment did Allah mete out to you?”

Imaam Ahmad: “He forgave me and I was given shoes of gold to wear. It was said that this was the reward for saying that the Qur`aan is the uncreated word of Allah. I was given freedom to wander anywhere in Jannat.

I saw Sufyaan Thauri with two green wings flying from tree to tree reciting the Qur`aanic Ayat:

“All praise is for Allah who has fulfilled His promise to us and who has made us the inheritors of Jannat. We enter any place we wish. Indeed, wonderful is the reward of those who practise righteousness.”

Companion: “How is Abdul Waahid Warraaq?”

Imaam Ahmad: “I left him while he was on board a ship of noor in sea of noor in the Divine Presence.”

Companion: “What is the state of Bishr Ibn Haarith?”

Imaam Ahmad: “Who can be like him? I saw him in Allah’s Presence. Allah was focussing His Attention to him. Allah said: ‘You would not eat. Eat now. You would not drink. Drink now. You would not be happy. Be happy now.’”

(ii). A Buzrug said: “I saw Ma`ruf Karkhi (rahmatullahi alayh) in a dream. He was below the Arsh. Allah Ta`ala said to the Malaa-ikah:

‘Who is this?’ They said: ‘O Allah! You are aware.’ Allah Ta`ala said: ‘This is Ma`ruf Karkhi who was annihilated in My Love. He will not regain consciousness without My Vision.’

(iii). Hadhrat Rabee’ Ibn Sulaimaan (rahmatullahi alayh) said: “I saw Imaam Shaafi (rahmatullahi alayh) in a dream after his death. I enquired about his state. He said:

‘I was seated on a throne of noor and glittering pearls cascaded over me.’”

(iv). A Buzrug saw Sheikh Abu Ishaq Ibraheem Ibn Ali Bin Yusuf Shirazi (rahmatullahi alayh) in a dream after his death. The Sheikh was clad in exceedingly white garment and had splendid crown on his head. I asked: “Why are you wearing white garments?” Sheikh Abu Ishaq said: “This is the holiness of ibaadat and the crown is the honour of knowledge (Ilm-e-Deen).”

(v). Hadhrat Sheikh Arif Abul Hasan Shazli (rahmatullahi alayh) once saw Rasulullah

(sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in a dream. Nabi-e-Kareem (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “Allah Ta`ala displayed Imaam Ghazali to Nabi Musa (alayhis salaam) and Nabi Isa (alayhis salaam) and asked them if there was such an Aalim in their respective Ummats. They replied in the negative.”

178. THE BARKAT OF SERVICE TO A MOTHER

Hadhrat Bilaal Khawwaas (rahmatullahi alayh) was once in the wilderness of Bani Israeel. Suddenly to his surprise he saw a man walking alongside. By way of ilham He realised that the man was Hadhrat Khidr (alayhis salaam)

Bilaal Khawwaas: “Truthfully tell me who are you.”

The man: “I am your brother Khidr.”

Bilaal Khawwaas: “What do you say about Imam Shaafi?”

Khidr: “He is a Siddique.”

Bilaal Khawwaas: “And Bishr Ibn Haarith?”

Khidr: “After him, none like him was born.”

Bilaal Khawwaas: “By virtue of whose barkat have I met you?”

Khidr: “By virtue of your service to your mother.”

179. RABIAH ADWIYYAH

Rabiah Adwiyyah’s servant narrates:

“Rabiah’s permanent, life-long practice was to perform Salaat the entire night. After sunrise she would lay for a short while on her musalla. When her eyes opened, she would be in a state of fear. Reprimanding herself, she would say: ‘How long will you sleep and refrain from ibaadat. Soon you will be overtaken by such sleep from which only the Trumpet (soor) will awaken you.’

This remained her condition until her death. When her time of maut was imminent she instructed me not to publicise her death. (Only those directly involved in her burial were informed). She further instructed me to prepare her Kafan from her simple cloak which she used to wear at the time of Tahajjud. Thus she was buried in that cloak and another cloak which she used to wear. The night after her burial, I saw Rabiah in a dream clad in the most beautiful silken garments. I asked what had happened to her old cloaks which were used as Kafan. She said: ‘It was removed from me, sealed and delivered to the loftiest heavenly realm (A`la Il-liyeeen). It will be added to my deeds on the Day of Qiyaamah. In place of it I have been dressed with the garments you are seeing now.’

I said: ‘Tell me of something by which I can gain Divine Proximity.’

She said: ‘Thikr in abundance. In the grave (Aalam-e-Barzakh) you will be envied.’

180. RABIAH SHAAMIYAH

She was the wife of Hadhrat Ahmad Bin Abi Hawaari (rahmatullahi alayh). Sometimes the state of Divine Love dominated her; sometimes it was the state of Divine Fear. She would pass the whole night performing Salaat. Once her husband said to her: “I have not seen anyone besides you performing Salaat the whole night.”

She replied: “Subhanallah! How can a man of your calibre make such remarks? I get up when the call for Salaat comes (i.e. from Allah Ta’ala).”

Once when it was her time to perform Salaat, her husband, Hadhrat Ahmad Hawaari was eating. She started admonishing him. He said: “Let me first complete eating.”

She said: “We are not the type of people whose eating is disturbed by the remembrance of the Aakhirah.”

She once said to him: “My love for you is not like the love for a husband. My love is a sister’s love for her brother.”

When she would cook something for him, she would say: “My chief! Eat this. It has been prepared with Tasbeeh.”

She would also encourage him to get married again.

181. THE THREE CLASSES OF IBAADAT

An Aabid who was on guard duty on the borders of Asqalan went one night on to the roof to perform Tahajjud. Suddenly he heard a voice from the sea exclaiming:

“O Servants! I have divided ibaadat into three classes - (1) Tahajjud; (2) Saum (fasting); (3) Dua, Tasbeeh, Istighfaar. Derive maximum benefit from each one.”

Hearing this, the Aabid fell into Sajdah.

[This revelation to the Aabid does not negate the other forms of ibaadat such as Tilaawat, Durood, Tahleel, Takbeer, etc. Perhaps the message had a special significance for only the Aabid who may have ignored the other forms].

182. QUR`AAN TILAAWAT

Hadhrat Juwairah (rahmatullahi alayha) was the emancipated slave-girl of a king. Observing her lofty state of Taqwa and ibaadat, Hadhrat Abu Abdullah Turaabi (rahmatullahi alayh), a renowned buzrug of the time, married her.

She would spend her entire time in ibaadat. One night in a dream she saw extremely beautiful heavenly mansions. When she enquired about these mansions, she was told that they belong to those who engaged in Qur'aan Tilaawat during Tahajjud time. From that time onwards she abandoned sleeping at night.

She would frequently wake up her husband and say: “Rise! The caravan has departed.”

183. THE NOOR OF TAQWA

Hadhrat Sittul Mulook (rahmatullahi alayha) was a famous Waliah (a saintly lady) who lived in Arabia. During her time, all the Auliya and Ulama would greatly honour her. Once she was in Baitil Maqdis. At that time there was a buzrug by the name of Ali Bin Albas Yamaani (rahmatullahi alayh). He narrates:

“I was inside the Musjid when I saw a slender pillar of noor extending from the dome of the Musjid right into the heaven. I went to investigate.”

When he came within the vicinity, he saw that under the dome, Hadhrat Sittul Mulook (rahmatullahi alayha) was engrossed in Salaat and the pillar of noor was emanating from her.

Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (rahmatullahi alayh) commented: “This pillar of noor was the noor of Taqwa which is in the hearts of all Muttaqeen. Sometimes Allah Ta`ala makes it manifest to show others. But the actual abode of this noor is the heart. Be firm in righteousness and abstain from transgression.”

184. IN LOVE WITH ALLAH

Hadhrat Umm-e-Haeroon (rahmatullahi alayha) was a noble saintly lady of lofty spiritual ranks. The fear of Allah Ta`ala was always dominant in her. She was at all times immersed in ibaadat. She derived great pleasure when it was night time. When the day began, she would become sad. Throughout the night she was wrapped up with Allah Ta`ala in ibaadat. The nights were her happiest times.

For thirty years she never applied oil to her hair. However, her hair always glittered and was naturally well-groomed. Once when she was in the forest, a lion appeared in front of her. She said: “If I am destined to be your Rizq, then devour me.” The lion turned and ran off.